TUESDAY
May 19, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
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State Achievements	1,52,492 Beneficiaries from Tumakuru District
— E-Pauti Campaign — **14.39 lakh Pauti Khata achievement**	E-Pauti - **1,06,000**
— Darkhast Phodi — **Phodi Progress for 2.5 lakh beneficiaries**	Revenue Village Hakku Patra - **20,666**
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NEET-UG 2026 PAPER LEAK

CBI arrests owner of coaching institute

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KUKI-NAGA ISSUE

Church bodies may broker peace in Manipur

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BATTLE AGAINST NAXALISM

Shah hails sacrifice of security forces

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DATA POINT

Minimum temperatures are rising faster

They were 0.5 degrees Celsius above normal

OPINION » PAGE 9

MAKING THE GRADE

Sunrisers and Titans enter the playoffs

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

Heavy rain throws life out of gear in city

BENGALURU
Heavy rain that lashed Bengaluru on Monday evening led to 21 trees being uprooted and 46 branches falling across the city, while several areas reported flooding that slowed traffic movement. » PAGE 3

Move to set up Circuit Bench opposed

MANGALURU
The Advocates' Association, Bengaluru, has written to Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice of the High Court of Karnataka, opposing the State government's proposed move to establish a Circuit Bench of the High Court at Mangaluru for coastal districts. » PAGE 6

SC voices 'reservations' on its own bail decision

The court's self-reproach in a narco-terrorism case judgment refers to Delhi riots conspiracy case involving Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam; it says that an accused cannot be indefinitely incarcerated

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday voiced "serious reservations" about "various aspects" of its January judgment refusing bail to former JNU student leader Umar Khalid and co-accused Sharjeel Imam in the Delhi riots 'larger conspiracy' case, including the foreclosing of their right to seek bail for a year.

The rare act of self-reproach came over a year after the court condemned Mr. Khalid and Mr. Imam as "alleged masterminds" who hatched the conspiracy behind the 2020 Delhi riots. At the time of the rejection of his bail plea, Mr. Khalid had already spent over five years in prison as an undertrial.

> Once it is obvious that a timely trial would not be possible and the accused has suffered incarceration for a significant period of time, the courts would ordinarily be obligated to enlarge the accused on bail... The presence of statutory restrictions...per se does not oust the ability of the courts to grant bail...
>
> **JUSTICE UJJAL BHUYAN**
> refers to KA Najeeb judgment

The Delhi Police had booked Mr. Khalid and other activists under the anti-terror law, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act or the UAPA, for their involvement in organising protests over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

'Not an empty slogan'

On Monday, a Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan said bail was indeed the rule in UAPA cases too.

Justice Bhuyan, who authored the judgment, said the catchphrase 'bail is the rule and jail is the exception' was not just an empty slogan, but a constitutional principle flowing from the fundamental rights to life, speedy trial and freedom from arbitrary arrests and detentions.

Bail to J&K man

The apex court's observations on Monday came in a judgment allowing bail to a Jammu and Kashmir man accused in a narco-terrorism case in which he had been incarcerated as an undertrial under the UAPA for five years.

It said an accused cannot be indefinitely incarcerated merely because the state was able to "satisfy" the low bar to refuse bail in UAPA cases. Justice Bhuyan said the right to personal liberty and speedy trial cannot become "subordinate" to the draconian bail provision, Section 43-D(5), of the UAPA.

CONTINUED ON
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Modi meets Norwegian PM as they seek to raise ties to Green Strategic Partnership

Suhasini Haidar
OSLO

India and Norway have differences, but they must unite against countries that "weaponise" diplomacy, trade and technology, said Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre here on Monday after talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, as the two countries upgraded ties to a "Green Strategic Partnership".

In statements to the media, both leaders emphasised their discussions on geopolitical conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia, with Mr. Modi contrasting the "instability and uncertainty" brought by the conflicts while India and Europe are entering a "new golden era" in ties.

"Both India and Norway believe in a rules-based order, dialogue, and diplomacy. We are unanimous that no issue can be resolved through military conflict. Whether it is Ukraine or West Asia, we support, and will continue to support, an early end to conflict and every effort toward peace," he said.

Vital meeting: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Norwegian counterpart in Oslo on Monday. ANI

He said that the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement signed last year with Norway and three EFTA countries – Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein – as well as the Green Strategic Partnership announced on Monday, would combine India's scale, speed, and talent with Norway's technology and capital.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Curb travel, use EVs: Finance Ministry to PSU banks, insurers

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Monday wrote to the heads of all public sector banks, regional rural banks, public sector insurers, and public sector small finance institutions, urging them to adopt several "austerity" measures in a bid to rationalise expenditure.

According to a circular, reviewed by *The Hindu* and titled "Implementation of austerity measures for rationalisation of expenditure", the Department of Financial Services asked the heads of its regulated entities to cut costs along two broad heads: reduction in travel, and the adoption of electric vehicles. The circular does not mention the West Asia crisis, but comes a little more than a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi exhorted the nation to adopt similar austerity measures.

The circular specified that "all meetings, reviews, consultations and presentations" are to be conducted via videoconferencing unless physical meetings are specifically required.

It added that foreign travel by the chairpersons, managing directors and CEOs, whole-time directors, and whole-time members of the boards of these institutions "may be kept below the prescribed limits" as laid out in the existing guidelines.

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TRUCK MOVEMENT HIT
» PAGE 13

Change of guard

Grand event: Congress leader V.D. Satheesan with Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar during his swearing-in as the Kerala Chief Minister at the Central Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. NIRMAL HARINDRAN (REPORT: SOUTH PAGE)

Iran submits fresh plan, says U.S. open to 'waive' sanctions

Stanly Johny

Iran has submitted a new 14-point proposal to the U.S. through Pakistan, aimed at ending the war amid a diplomatic impasse and fears of renewed hostilities, even as President Masoud Pezeshkian said the country "will not bow to any power".

On April 10, Iran had sent its response to an American plan, which President Donald Trump dismissed as "totally unacceptable". According to Iranian officials, Tehran proposed negotiations to focus on ending the war, while deferring talks on the nuclear file to a later stage. The U.S. subsequently sent a formal reply to Iran's proposal, with Tehran's latest 14-point plan constituting its response to the American text.

"In line with the recent practice of exchanging messages, Iran has also once again submitted its text in 14 points through the Pakistani mediator after making amendments," an Iranian official said, according to the Tasnim news agency.

Tasnim quoted another Iranian official as saying that the U.S. has agreed to waive sanctions on Iran during the negotiation period. Iran has insisted that removal of all sanctions on the country should be part of a final agreement. "The U.S. has proposed a waiver of OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) sanctions until a final understanding is reached," it reported.

The U.S., which along with Israel launched the war on February 28, announced a ceasefire on April 8, citing progress in negotiations. Iranian and American officials held one round of direct talks in Islamabad on April 11 but failed to reach any breakthrough. Immediately after the talks failed, Mr. Trump announced a blockade of Iran's ports. Iran, which took control of the Strait of Hormuz after the war broke out, has demanded the U.S. end the blockade as a confidence building measure to take talks forward.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian with Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

"We will not bow. I will never bow before any power. We will not sacrifice the country's dignity for the sake of comfort-seeking and our own worldly desires, but we must manage the country with prudence and wisdom," Mr. Pezeshkian said on Monday about the negotiations, according to Press TV.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei told presspersons on Monday that the diplomatic process continues through Pakistan despite the tensions.

On Sunday, Iran unveiled a new body, the Persian Gulf Strait Authority, to control the strait.

RELATED REPORT ON
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T.N. tourist dies during elephant clash at Dubare camp

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

A tourist from Chennai died after being caught in a clash between two captive elephants at the popular Dubare Elephant Camp, near Kushalnagar in Kodagu district on Monday, prompting the State government to initiate a safety review and consider stricter regulations for visitors interacting with elephants.

The victim, identified as Joysi, 33, was reportedly watching the elephants being bathed in the Cauvery when the incident occurred at the camp, one of Kodagu's major tourist attractions that houses several captive elephants. According to officials, captive elephants Kanjan and Marthanda got into a tussle during a bathing session at the camp.

Despite efforts by the mahouts to bring the situation under control, Kanjan allegedly charged at Marthanda, causing the latter to lose balance and collapse. Joysi, who was standing nearby watching the activity, got trapped beneath the elephant and died.

Video footage of the incident shows the victim's husband Joel and a child, who were near her at the time of the mishap, escaping unhurt.

However, despite attempting to help, he was unable to rescue her as the elephant had fallen on her, while Kanjan continued attacking Marthanda repeatedly, leaving no opportunity for him or others at the spot to come to her aid. The situation was later brought under control after other mahouts and kavadis rushed to calm the elephants. The incident triggered panic among visitors at the camp as they ran for safety following the clash. The camp attracts tourists throughout the year. Meanwhile, Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar B. Khandre expressed grief over the death and described the incident as "shocking".

A video grab shows two captive elephants clashing during a bathing session at the Dubare Elephant Camp near Kushalnagar on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Officials informed me that the woman was watching the elephants being bathed near the river when the accident occurred," the Minister said while offering condolences to the bereaved family. In a statement, Mr. Khandre termed the incident an unforeseen tragedy and said a detailed inquiry had been ordered to ascertain the circumstances leading to the accident and prevent similar incidents in future. The tourist's death has also prompted the government to move towards tighter safety measures at elephant camps and wildlife tourism centres.

Pointing out that animal behaviour can remain unpredictable even among trained or captive elephants, the Minister directed officials to examine restrictions on close-contact tourist activities.

These include touching elephants' trunks, posing for photographs beside them, participating in elephant bathing activities, and feeding them jaggery, bananas or other food items.

RELATED REPORT ON
» PAGE 2

The Titan maker

Control with the ball, crucial lower-order runs, and composure under pressure — Holder has changed the rhythm of Gujarat's season. Now, Gill's men look one of the most complete teams in the tournament and are gathering momentum going into the playoffs

AP

Tarun Shastry

In the high-octane world of the Indian Premier League, momentum is a fragile currency. Franchises spend a fortune trying to manufacture it, yet it can disappear in an instant.

For much of the first half of the 2026 season, Gujarat Titans looked like a side rich in talent but lacking in balance. Its top-heavy batting line-up often left the middle-order vulnerable, while a star-studded bowling attack struggled to find the control needed to suffocate opponents through the middle overs.

Then came the turning point: Jason Holder.

At 6-foot-7, the Barbadian did not simply enter the playing XI – he transformed it. GT now sits second in the points table, winning five of its last six matches, with 16 points.

Holder has been far more than a tactical adjustment; he has emerged as the catalyst behind the side's resurgence, offering a masterclass in how a genuine three-dimensional cricketer can instantly reshape a franchise's fortunes.

When GT outbid Chennai Super Kings to sign Holder for ₹7 crore at the auction, the move was viewed as a smart depth acquisition. His absence from the opening matches raised questions, but his eventual inclusion has completely rebalanced Shubman Gill's side.

Impactful

The numbers underline just how impactful he has been. Across six matches, Holder has claimed 13 wickets at a staggering average of 10.92, while maintaining an economy rate of 6.35 and a strike rate of 10.30.

Among bowlers who have delivered at least 15 overs this season, Holder boasts both the best bowling average and strike rate in the tournament. His lower-order contributions with the bat have only added to GT's tactical flexibility.

Holder announced himself immediately in a high-pressure away fixture against Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. He smashed a rapid 23 off just 10 balls, including two towering sixes, to provide late momentum before returning figures of 3.5-0-35-1 to help GT secure victory.

He followed that with a disciplined outing at Chepauk against CSK. On a surface demanding precision, Holder delivered four controlled overs for just 22 runs, applying pressure that allowed Kagiso Rabada to attack aggressively from the other end.

Against RCB in Ahmedabad, Holder used his height brilliantly to extract steep bounce from the Narendra Modi Stadium surface, finishing with figures of 4-0-29-2 while also contributing a valuable 12 off 10 balls during a tense chase.

The 34-year-old's defining performance, however, came against Punjab Kings in Ahmedabad. Holder tore through the batting lineup with a devastating spell of seam bowling, finishing with 4-0-24-4, his best returns in IPL and deservedly earning the Player of the Match award.

Before Holder's arrival, Titans relied heavily on Gill, Sai Sudharsan, and Buttler to either set or chase totals. The West Indian's presence fundamentally changed that dynamic

He then showcased his adaptability on a slower Jaipur surface against Rajasthan Royals, dismantling the middle order with clever cutters and defensive lengths to claim three wickets in a devastating 2.3-over burst. Most recently, against the explosive Sunrisers Hyderabad batting lineup, Holder once again delivered under pressure. He scalped three wickets and remained unbeaten on 11 off 10 balls to guide GT home comfortably.

Before his arrival, Titans relied heavily on Shubman Gill, Sai Sudharsan, and Jos Buttler to either set or chase totals. Holder's presence has fundamentally changed that dynamic, forming a reliable lower-order partnership with Rahul Tewatia and giving the Titans a level of insurance they previously lacked.

Importantly, Holder's IPL resurgence is no isolated purple patch. It is a continuation of the elite form he displayed on the international stage during the recent T20 World Cup, where he was central to West Indies' campaign.

During that period, he became the first West Indian bowler to reach 100 T20 International wickets. He finished the tournament with 10 wickets at an exceptional average of 12.20 and an economy rate of 6.65, excelling both with the new ball and at the death through his variations and hard lengths.

His batting contributions proved equally valuable. Against South Africa, Holder produced a counterattacking 49 that single-handedly kept West Indies in the contest. He followed it with an unbeaten 37 against India in Kolkata, striking at 168.18 while anchoring a crucial 76-run partnership.

It was this ability to influence games across multiple phases that convinced Titans to go all-in for him at the auction.

Elite-level experience

Holder's impact is rooted in more than a decade of elite-level experience. Since making his IPL debut in 2013, he has shown how good a utility player he is. His journey began with Chennai Super Kings, where he played six matches as a raw 21-year-old. Stints with Sunrisers Hyderabad and Kolkata Knight Riders followed, but it was during his second spell with SRH that he evolved into a genuine T20 force.

In 2020, Holder claimed 14 wickets in just seven matches, and he followed it up in 2021 with 16 wickets in eight games alongside valuable lower-order runs. Lucknow Super Giants then signed him for the 2022 season, where he collected 14 wickets in 12 matches before moving to Rajasthan Royals in 2023.

Awkward release point

What makes Holder such a formidable force in modern T20 cricket is the combination of physical advantage, tactical evolution, and composure under pressure. With his tall physique, he generates an awkward release point that few batters can comfortably handle.

On abrasive subcontinental surfaces, Holder does not rely on raw pace; instead, he relentlessly attacks hard lengths, extracting steep and often unpredictable bounce that forces mistakes.

Equally important has been the evolution of his white-ball skillset. During a prolific stretch across franchise cricket, Holder broke the record for the most T20 wickets in a calendar year with 97 scalps. That relentless workload refined his slower balls, wide yorkers, and off-cutters into elite death-bowling weapons.

Blessed with calmness forged through years of captaining West Indies during turbulent periods, Holder has become a stabilising influence in GT's attack. While Rabada, Mohammed Siraj, and Prasidh Krishna hunt wickets aggressively, Holder provides the control and clarity that allows plans to function cohesively.

Holder's impact is rooted in more than a decade of elite-level experience. Since making his IPL debut in 2013, he has shown how good a utility player he is

As IPL 2026 approaches its business end, Titans are no longer merely contenders – they are genuine title favourites. That transformation can largely be traced back to Holder's inclusion.

He has solved the side's structural weaknesses, strengthened the lower order, and elevated the bowling unit into one of the most complete attacks in the tournament.

Lending competitive edge

Momentum in the IPL can disappear overnight. But since Holder walked into Titans' XI, it has only gathered force. He has given the side control, composure, and a ruthless competitive edge at exactly the right stage of the season.

Now, with the playoffs looming, the Titans are no longer just chasing the trophy, they look built to seize it. And standing at the centre of that charge is a towering all-rounder who has turned the side's campaign on its head.

THE GIST

- Holder has been far more than a tactical adjustment; he has emerged as the catalyst behind the side's resurgence, offering a masterclass in how a genuine three-dimensional cricketer can instantly reshape a franchise's fortunes
- Blessed with calmness forged through years of captaining West Indies during turbulent periods, he has become a stabilising influence in GT's attack
- What makes Holder such a formidable force in modern T20 cricket is the combination of physical advantage, tactical evolution, and composure under pressure. With his tall physique, he generates an awkward release point that few batters can comfortably handle

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GUT SAMRAKSHAK

The Gut-Brain Connection

Dr Umesh Jalihal
Consultant Gastroenterologist

Did you know your gut and brain are constantly talking? Stress doesn't cause IBD, but it sends signals that can make your intestines cramp and bleed more.

Tips: When you feel a "gut feeling" of anxiety, practice five minutes of deep belly breathing. This calms the Vagus nerve, which connects your brain to your digestive system.

Conclusion: A calm mind is a powerful ally in keeping your gut symptoms under control.

The Risk of "Home Remedies"

Dr Parvesh Kumar Jain
Consultant Gastroenterologist

Taking advice from neighbors to eat raw garlic or neem to "cleanse" the gut can backfire. These can be very harsh on an already inflamed intestinal wall.

Tips: Before trying any "Gharelu Nuskhe" (home remedies), ask your specialist. What works for a normal stomach might be harmful for an IBD gut.

Conclusion: Your gut is sensitive; treat it with the gentleness that medical science recommends.

Watching for Blood

Dr Gowtham S L
Surgical Gastroenterologist

Seeing blood in stools is often mistaken for piles (hemorrhoids) in Indian households. While piles are common, blood is also a major red flag for Ulcerative Colitis.

Tips: Check if the blood is mixed with mucus or accompanied by an urgent need to go. If you feel tired or look pale (anemic), see a doctor immediately.

Conclusion: Never assume rectal bleeding is "just piles"; a professional diagnosis can save your life.

The "No-Fry" Rule

Dr Kiran S
Consultant Gastroenterologist

IBD involves inflammation, and trans-fats found in deep-fried foods like puri or vada are known to increase inflammatory markers in the body.

Tips: Switch to grilling, pressure cooking, or light sautéing. If you crave a crunch, try dry-roasted poha or makhana instead of fried snacks.

Conclusion: Reducing oil intake is not just for heart health; it is essential for calming an angry gut.

Protein and the Gut

Dr Raghu B M
Consultant Gastroenterologist

While protein is vital, high-protein diets without enough plant fiber can severely slow down transit time in IBS-C patients.

Tips: Balance your paneer or chicken dishes with double the amount of cooked vegetables. Opt for plant-based proteins that come with built-in fiber.

Conclusion: Nutrition is about balance; ensuring your protein intake doesn't "clog" your system is crucial for daily comfort.

Long-term Management Goals

IBS-C is a chronic condition, meaning it is managed rather than "cured" overnight. Success is measured by consistent comfort rather than a single day of relief.

Tips: Don't get discouraged by occasional flare-ups. Stay consistent with your diet, hydration, and stress management even when you are feeling well.

Conclusion: Patient persistence is the most effective medicine; focus on small, daily wins for a lifetime of digestive health.

Dr Dharshan
Consultant Gastroenterologist

Avoiding the "Morning Rush"

Vinod Gowda KH
Consultant Gastroenterologist

The body's strongest natural urge to move the bowels occurs in the morning. However, the stress of getting ready for work or school often suppresses this urge, leading to chronic backup.

Tips: Wake up 20 minutes earlier than necessary to give your body a dedicated "quiet window" for elimination. Sip a warm beverage and sit comfortably without your phone to allow the natural reflex to take over.

Conclusion: Stress is a major inhibitor of the gut; by eliminating the morning rush, you give your digestive system the peace it needs to function.

Tea, Coffee, and Dehydration

Dr M Pavan Kumar
Consultant Gastroenterologist

While many Indians use strong tea or coffee to "trigger" a bowel movement, caffeine is a diuretic that actually removes water from the colon. This makes the stool harder over time.

Tips: If you must have your morning chai, follow it immediately with two glasses of plain water. Try switching to herbal infusions like ginger or fennel tea which soothe the gut.

Conclusion: Relying on caffeine for regularity is a temporary fix that creates a long-term cycle of dehydration and constipation.

The Role of Steamed Foods

Dr Vijaya G
Surgical Gastroenterologist

In my clinical practice, I often see patients struggle with raw salads. For those with IBD, raw vegetables have tough fibers that can irritate an inflamed intestinal lining.

Tips: Switch to steaming your vegetables like carrots, bottle gourd (lauki), and pumpkin. Steaming breaks down fibers, making them easier for your gut to absorb.

Conclusion: Soft, steamed food reduces the "workload" on your intestines, allowing them time to heal.

Your Travel Medicine Kit

When away from your local doctor, a well-stocked medical kit is your best friend. Never leave home without your regular IBD maintenance drugs.

Tips: Carry a prescription copy and extra doses of your medicines. Include ORS packets and doctor-approved anti-diarrheals for emergencies.

Conclusion: Being prepared medically gives you the mental peace needed to enjoy your trip to the fullest.

Dr Sahadev R
Surgical Gastroenterologist

Prebiotics vs. Probiotics

Dr Preethan K N
Surgical Gastroenterologist

While probiotics add "good" bacteria, prebiotics are the food that helps those bacteria survive. Without them, your gut microbiome cannot thrive enough to help with IBS-C.

Tips: Eat "prebiotic" foods like garlic, onions, and slightly under-ripe bananas. These provide the necessary nourishment for a healthy, active gut flora.

Conclusion: A successful gut-health strategy requires both the "seeds" (probiotics) and the "fertilizer" (prebiotics) to work effectively.

Avoiding the "Why Me?" Trap

Dr Muralidhar S Kathalagiri
Surgical Gastroenterologist

Chronic illness often leads to feelings of "Why did this happen to me?" This "victim mindset" can lead to depression, which further weakens the immune system.

Tips: Practice daily gratitude. Write down three things that went well today, even if they are small. Shifting your focus from "illness" to "wellness" changes your biology.

Conclusion: A positive outlook doesn't cure IBD, but it makes the journey significantly easier to manage.

"This is a patient awareness initiative by MSN labs. The views and opinions expressed here are based on the expertise of the doctors and is not endorsed by MSN labs. Reader's are advised to seek to necessary medical advice from a qualified medical practitioner."

State reinforces rules for sale of petrol and diesel

Meanwhile, reports of fuel rationing in parts of North Karnataka trigger confusion

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As per the directions, fuel must be dispensed only into vehicle fuel tanks or authorised containers; petrol pumps have been barred from supplying petrol or diesel in bottles and cans. FILE PHOTO

The Karnataka Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department has issued stringent guidelines to retail petrol pumps on the sale and distribution of petrol and diesel, even as reports of fuel rationing in parts of North Karnataka triggered confusion on Monday.

On May 8, the department directed all fuel stations to strictly adhere to regulated distribution norms, warning that violations could lead to cancellation of licences. It reminded outlets that, as per the 2002 guidelines, they are not permitted to dispense more than 200 litres of fuel, and such quantities can be supplied only through direct sales mechanisms and depots. As per the directions, fuel must be dispensed only into vehicle fuel tanks or authorised containers. Petrol pumps have also been barred from supplying petrol or diesel in bottles, plastic cans or any unauthorised containers under any circumstances. Amid this, a petrol pump owner in Hubballi said that company officials had orally instructed outlets to limit fuel supply to a maximum of 25 litres for cars and 150 litres for trucks and other commercial vehicles. However, another pump owner clarified that while there had been discussions around rationing, no official communication had been received. He added that, following directions from the Deputy Commissioner, fuel stations had stopped dispensing fuel in containers such as cans and bottles.

Despite the reports, the situation on the ground appeared largely normal, with no visible restrictions for customers. Staff at several petrol pumps told *The Hindu* that they had not received any directives from their management regarding fuel rationing. They acknowledged that the ban on filling fuel in containers had affected businesses reliant on diesel for generators. In Bengaluru, there has been no disruption or fuel rationing. Ravi Kumar, a petrol pump owner in Bilekahalli, stated that no such rationing orders had been issued in the city.

In Mysuru too, there were no instructions regarding fuel rationing, according to Shashikala Nagaraj, president of the Federation of Mysore Petroleum Traders. She confirmed that petrol pumps had only been directed not to dispense fuel in cans or bottles as a precautionary measure.

100-ft safety buffer imposed around elephants after Dubare tragedy

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Following the fatal incident at the Dubare Elephant Camp that claimed the life of a woman tourist, Minister for Forest, Ecology and Environment Eshwar B. Khandre on Monday directed that tourists should not be allowed near elephants and must maintain a minimum distance of 100 feet while watching elephant bathing activities at all elephant camps across the State.

The directive will come into effect from Tuesday.

Eshwar B. Khandre

The Minister also ordered the framing of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for tourist safety at all elephant camps and instructed the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden to tighten safety measures.

The move follows the incident at the Dubare Elephant Camp near Kushalnagar in Kodagu district, where two captive elephants clashed during a bathing session, leading to the death of a tourist from Tamil Nadu.

As part of the immediate measures, tourists will not be permitted to approach elephants under any circumstances. Visitors will also be barred from taking selfies or photographs in close proximity to elephants and from participating in elephant bathing activities, Mr. Khandre stated in a press release.

The Minister said that an SOP had already been prepared for eco-tourism trekking routes and that operations at such trails had been temporarily suspended until the implementation of safety protocols. Similar guidelines, he said, would now be prepared for elephant camps for visitor safety.

Undertrials create ruckus at security check at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison, booked

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The staff of Parappana Agrahara Central Prison have lodged a complaint against three undertrials booked for terror charges for obstructing security personnel during routine frisking procedures after returning from hospital visits.

According to the complaint filed by prison superintendent Karna B. Kshatri through staff member Shivu L.S. Tippeswamy, undertrial prisoners are frequently taken outside the prison premises for medical treatments and court appearances. Before re-entering the jail premises, they undergo mandatory security checks by Karnataka State Industrial Security Force (KSISF) personnel guarding the prison.

The complaint stated that on May 16, around 10 a.m., a few undertrial prisoners were taken to a hospital for treatment. After returning to the prison around 2.30 p.m., the accused – identified as Farioz Pasha, Muzamil Sharif, and Mohaboob Pasha – allegedly refused to cooperate with the frisking procedures and created a ruckus during the inspection process.

Despite resistance, the prisoners were later subjected to security checks after three hours and allowed inside the prison around 5.15 p.m.

Based on the complaint, a case has been registered, and further legal action has been initiated against the accused prisoners.

KSRTC warns staff against joining strike from May 20

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has issued a stern warning to employees and staff members against participating in the indefinite State-wide strike proposed from May 20, stating that strict disciplinary measures, including salary cuts under the 'no work, no pay' rule, will be enforced against those remaining absent from duty.

The warning was issued through a circular by KSRTC managing director Akram Pasha on Monday amid growing tensions between transport corporation employees and the State government over unresolved demands relating to wage revision, pending arrears, and employee welfare benefits. The Joint Action Committee of trade unions representing employees of the four State-run road transport corporations has called for an indefinite strike beginning Wednesday, alleging that appeals to the government regarding these issues have not received a favourable response.

In the circular, Mr. Pasha stated that the proposed strike cannot be permitted under the prevailing legal framework governing essential public services. He pointed out that the State government has already brought the services of all State-run transport corporations under the ambit of the Karnataka Essential Services Maintenance Act , 2013. As per the circular, employees working in transport corporations are barred from resorting to strikes. It further noted that all four road transport corporations in Karnataka have been categorised as public utility services, making strike actions legally restricted, especially when conciliation proceedings are under way.

Mr. Pasha urged employees to continue attending duty regularly to maintain uninterrupted transport services for the public. He said that transport services are vital for lakhs of passengers across Karnataka and that employees should protect the confidence reposed in the corporations by the people. The circular instructed officials across divisions and depots to take all necessary precautionary measures to ensure scheduled bus operations are not disrupted during the proposed strike period. Officials were further directed not to approve leave requests from May 20 onwards except in unavoidable situations.

Officials have been instructed to prepare day-wise, unit-wise and category-wise records of absent employees for salary deduction and disciplinary proceedings.

Karnataka may face fertilizer shortage during kharif season, says Cheluvarayaswamy

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Farmers in Karnataka may face a shortage of fertilizers in the upcoming kharif season, Minister for Agriculture N. Cheluvarayaswamy has indicated.

Participating in a Meet-the-Press event organised by the Press Club of Bangalore here on Monday, the Minister said that in April, out of the allocated 4.02 lakh tonnes of various grades of fertilizers, only 2.54 lakh tonnes were supplied by the Union government, leaving a deficit of 1.48 lakh tonnes.

According to him, for May, out of the allocated 4.54 lakh tonnes of various grades of fertilizers, only 1.77 lakh tonnes have been supplied by the Central government so far, while another 2.77 lakh tonnes are still pending.

"Due to this, there is a possibility of shortage of fertilizers in the kharif season. This may also be due to the current instability in the import of fertilizers," the Minister said.

Minister for Agriculture N. Cheluvarayaswamy visiting a stall at Press Club in Bengaluru on Monday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

He further stated that the State had been bracing for a potential shortage of fertilizers in the 2026 kharif season, as supplies were being adversely affected ahead of the monsoon.

"There is instability in the import of fertilizers. However, measures are being taken by our government to manage the shortage," the Minister promised.

He also noted that in the wake of the West Asian crisis, there had been a surge in the demand for raw materials required for fertiliser production, such as ammonia, liquefied natural gas (LNG), phosphoric acid, sulphuric acid, and other byproducts in the global market.

The Minister urges farmers to reduce their over-dependence on chemical fertilizers

He mentioned that he held a meeting with authorities and emphasised the need for the timely allocation and dispatch of fertilizers to the State. To meet any shortage during the peak farming season, a buffer stock of 56,199 tonnes of various grades of fertilizers was currently being maintained.

Responding to media queries, the Minister said fertilizer vendors had been warned against creating artificial scarcity, selling fertilizers to farmers in excess of the required quantity, or committing any other violations of the Fertilizers (Inorganic, Organic or Mixed) (Control) Order, 1985, and the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

"Appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that subsidised fertilizers are distributed equitably to all districts," he informed, adding that the Agriculture Department and district magistrates had been directed to strictly monitor the distribution process.

Furthermore, government officials, with the assistance of the Agriculture Department, had been asked to coordinate with the Commercial Taxes Department at inter-State check-posts to curb illegal transportation and smuggling of fertilizers. A mobile application had also been developed to facilitate the seamless purchase of urea by farmers.

The Minister also urged farmers to increasingly explore green manure and compost, venture into natural and organic farming, and reduce their over-dependence on chemical fertilizers.

Timings
BENGALURU

TUESDAY, MAY. 19		
RISE	05:54	SET 18:39
RISE	08:07	SET 21:37
WEDNESDAY, MAY. 20		
RISE	05:54	SET 18:39
RISE	09:15	SET 22:36
THURSDAY, MAY. 21		
RISE	05:53	SET 18:39
RISE	10:19	SET 23:29

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	34	22
Bengaluru	33	23

Bengaluru Today
33°C The weather will be warm. Spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower to occur. Night will be comfortable.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night also will be pleasant. Chances of light to moderate rain and thundershower.

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THE HINDU
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Space Meetings Veneto 2026: Indian space-tech firms sign partnerships in Italy

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian delegation held engagements with the Italian Space Industry Study Group to explore opportunities for commercial and technological cooperation between the two countries.

Nine Indian space-tech companies, which were part of the delegation led by Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe), have signed multiple partnerships at the recently held Space Meetings Veneto 2026 at Venice, Italy.

The Indian delegation also held strategic engagements with the Italian Space Industry Study Group to explore opportunities for deeper commercial and technological cooperation between the two countries.

IN-SPACe which is the single-window agency for all space sector activities of private entities said that the nine Indian space-tech companies, including Astrogate Labs, Astrobase Space Technologies, VyomIC, Suhora, Kepler Aerospace Ltd., Hyspace Technologies, TakeMe2Space, Jarbits Pvt. Ltd. and Dhruva Space, joined the delegation, with multiple partnerships and collaboration announcements emerging during the visit.

Key partnerships

Among the key developments, Karnataka-based Astrobase Space Technologies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Impulso Space to support customer access and explore launch opportunities through integrated mission management and launch service networks.

Kepler Aerospace signed a framework agreement with Apogeo Space to expand global Ground Station as a Service (GSaaS) infrastructure and strengthen satellite collaboration between India and Europe. The partnership will further explore joint opportunities across CubeSat systems, payload technologies, satellite infrastructure and mission operations. VyomIC showcased its technologies during the event and announced a strategic collaboration focused on building next-generation navigation and resilient infrastructure technologies.

Space capabilities

"India's participation at Space Meetings Veneto reflects the growing global confidence in the country's space capabilities and private sector ecosystem. More importantly, this year's engagements translated into meaningful strategic partnerships between Indian and international space companies. The agreements signed by Astrobase Space Technologies, Kepler Aerospace, and VyomIC highlight the increasing competitiveness and global readiness of Indian space enterprises.

As India strengthens its position in the global space economy, IN-SPACe remains committed to enabling industry-led international collaborations," said P.K. Jain, director, Programme Management and Authorisation Directorate, IN-SPACe.

This visit follows the Italian Aerospace Delegation's visit to India in 2025. IN-SPACe said that in alignment with the 2025-2029 India-Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan announced during the G20 Summit 2024, a bilateral meeting took place.

It added that this will result in strengthening collaboration between the two countries.

Another FIR against city businessman in harassment case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Yet another case has been registered against M. Kripalani, an electronics goods dealer from the city who had been accused of allegedly sexually assaulting a customs official. This time, a 50-year-old customs officer has filed a complaint alleging that he and his family received death threats from Kripalani.

According to the complaint, the complainant, identified as D. Anthony, stated that he was involved in an investigation related to alleged GST and customs duty evasion in Mangaluru. During the inquiry, authorities allegedly imposed a customs duty penalty of ₹6.07 lakh, an importer penalty of ₹5 lakh, and an additional penalty of ₹2.5 lakh under Section 114AA of the Customs Act, 1962, against Kripalani.

The accused allegedly then developed a grudge against him. On April 1, Mr. Anthony's colleague allegedly forwarded a WhatsApp message to him containing an audio clip, in which the accused was purportedly heard threatening to harm Mr. Anthony and his family. The following day, he allegedly received another audio recording threatening him. The police have registered a case.

Kripalani is already facing allegations of blackmailing and sexually harassing a woman customs officer. According to investigators, the accused allegedly threatened to leak private photos and videos if his demands were not met.

India still short on expertise, tools to manage fungal health burden

Over 5 crore Indians suffer from fungal diseases; now researchers are working to identify priority fungal pathogens circulating within its borders; they are also working to map antifungal resistance in pathogens in the environment and develop newer therapeutics such as antimicrobial peptides

Somdatta Karak

For almost 25 summers, Sunita (name changed) gets a severe 'sweat rash' on her neck in the hot and humid weather of Mumbai. The rash turns black, looks almost burnt, and stays that way until the monsoons arrive. Then, as if miraculously, the dead skin is shed and her neck looks just fine all over again.

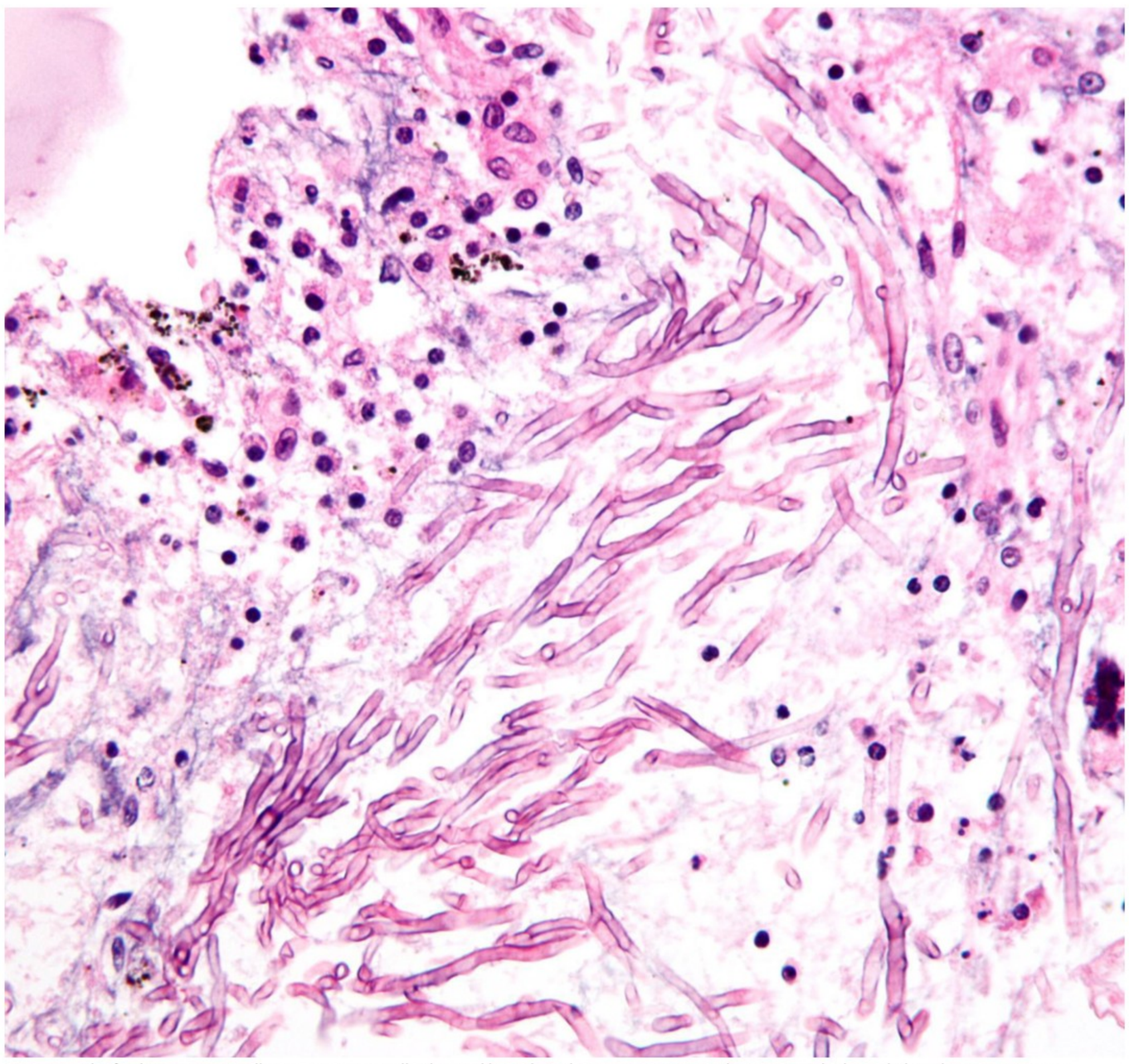
Doctors have told her she needn't worry too much about it and that she just tries to keep her neck bare and dry. Sunita, however, is embarrassed every time this happens and becomes anxious about hiding the rash or explaining it to puzzled and concerned onlookers.

She has been self-medicating with a popular anti-fungal powder plus time under an air-conditioner to tame the rash on sweaty summer days. So far this year, her neck has been clear.

Sunita's situation may be familiar to the increasing number of people who suffer fungal infections in India. The World Health Organization released a priority list of fungal pathogens in 2022 while also saying data of fungal diseases and their morbidity are lacking.

A 2024 review in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* estimated 3.8 million people die every year due to fungal diseases, compounded by public fears about antimicrobial resistance and concerns about whether antifungal drugs will work.

For this situation, however, India lacks expertise on the genesis and effects of fungal pathogens as well as a paucity of institutes dedicated to fungal outbreaks, like it does for viral and bacterial infections (such as tuberculosis).



A micrograph of pulmonary aspergillosis. Fungi grow well in hot and humid conditions, putting tropical countries at higher risk than those in temperate regions. NEPHRON (CC BY-SA)

Mindset, investment problem

Fungi grow well in hot and humid conditions, putting tropical countries at higher risk than those in temperate regions.

"In the western world, especially in temperate conditions, ophthalmologists see one to a couple of cases per year," Prashant Garg, executive chair of the L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI), Hyderabad, said. "These numbers are way higher in tropical countries. We see three to four cases of fungal eye infections in our hospital daily."

According to one estimate published by scientists from India and the U.K. in the *Open Forum Infectious Diseases* in 2022, more than 5 crore Indians likely suffer from fungal diseases – one of the highest national burdens worldwide.

These diseases are generally called mycoses; they affect the eyes, skin, lungs, vagina, and brain and cause blood infections.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, an opportunistic infection called mucormycosis captured the public imagination. Caused by black fungus, its prevalence is about 80-times higher in India than in the economically developed countries.

Despite the burden of fungal diseases in India, clinicians are often not equipped to deal with them. Most clinicians prescribe antibacterial medications first. When those don't work, they try antifungals. This delay allows the fungi to intrude deeper into a patient's body and becomes harder to get rid of.

'A dying art'

Anuradha Chowdhary, director professor at the Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute in the University of Delhi, said, "Many cases that test negative for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* are still called tuberculosis and treated with anti-tuberculosis drugs. Our country's microbiology departments do not test them for common respiratory fungal conditions like aspergillosis or the rarely identified histoplasmosis."

"Fungal testing must begin at the same time as bacterial testing in a microbiology lab," Dr. Chowdhary added.

Fungi are present everywhere. When an individual tests positive for a fungal infection, there is sometimes a doubt as to whether the fungus came from the patient's sample or if it is a contaminant that entered the sample from the testing facility or the tester.

The most trusted way to confirm a fungal infection is to have it grow on microbiology culture plates.

"We lightly scrape a sample from an infected region of the eye, place it on various culture media. Some allow growth of bacteria and some of fungi," LVPEI head of microbiology Joveeta Joseph explained.

"We sometimes have to wait for days to see if a fungus grows where we placed the patient sample on the culture plate. If a fungus grows elsewhere on the plate, that is because of contamination."

Identifying the actual pathogen can take longer than just confirming a fungus's presence. Here, the details of fungal spore morphology matter.

Fungal spores come in different colours, shapes, and sizes. And microbiologists use fungal handbooks and databases to identify the spores.

"It is a dying art," Dr. Chowdhary said.

"Plus, some fungi do not form spores in lab cultures. Or the entire procedure can take up to a month," Dr. Joseph added. "Very few medical setups invest in that kind of investigation. It is expensive for the patient and technically demanding for the healthcare providers."

Treating animals

These challenges aren't confined to human medicine. The chytrid fungus causes an infection called chytridiomycosis, and it has been annihilating frogs and salamanders in many parts of the world. Chytrids grow on the animals' skin – an organ crucial for respiration among these amphibious animals.

To make matters worse, it is very difficult to outwardly distinguish an infected animal from an uninfected one in the earlier stages of infection, when the animal can still be saved.

"Culturing chytrid fungus in the lab is almost a fluke since it is present in low numbers," CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology scientist Karthikeyan Vasudevan said. "Some add hair to their culture, some snake skin since keratin helps in growing this fungus. But details such as how much to add or when are often not shared in research papers."

Of course, more advanced tests are more helpful. They help reduce contamination as well as accelerate the reactions required to identify specific species.

For example, a test called MALDI-TOF – short for matrix-assisted laser desorption/ionisation time-of-flight mass spectrometry – has an automated technique that can identify the proteins on the pathogens' surfaces. It does this by creating a surface protein signature of the sample and compares that with an existing database of pathogens.

While MALDI-TOF can identify fungi in about 30 minutes, it remains in the dark about new pathogens emerging in tropical countries, and which are not reflected in the prevailing fungi databases.

MALDI-TOF is also very expensive. New units can cost upwards of ₹1.5 crore apiece; even refurbished ones can cost ₹10 lakh or more.

The PCR tests that check for pathogen's genetic material, and which were widely used during the COVID-19 pandemic, are one alternative.

> For fungal infection diagnostics to work in clinical settings, lab protocols usually need improvements in specimen handling, volume, transport and storage, standardisation, speed, and proper contamination controls
>
> **RUPINDER KAUR**
> Staff scientist at BRIC-Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics

But while they worked well for the coronavirus, they're not well-suited for fungi. This is because fungal cells have tough cell walls that need to be broken open first to extract the fungal DNA. (PCR works by creating numerous copies of DNA material, then checking them for species signatures.)

Timely diagnostics

Some work here is underway – such as that of BRIC-Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, Hyderabad, staff scientist Rupinder Kaur said. However, these lab-level processes have yet to be standardised for clinical settings. One major challenge is the small quantity of pathogenic material when working with patient samples.

"For fungal infection diagnostics to work in clinical settings, lab protocols usually need improvements in specimen handling, volume, transport and storage, standardisation, speed, and proper contamination controls," Dr. Kaur said. "It is always helpful if lab protocols utilise at least a small set of complex, varied clinical samples to optimise concentrations of primers, cell wall-digesting enzymes, time duration for mechanical cell lysis using bead-beater etc., for developed procedures."

She added that more advanced PCR tests have not been tested enough for use in fungal contexts.

Timely diagnostics help clinicians decide the appropriate next steps, such as choosing the right antifungal drugs to treat a particular infection.

This said, the number of antifungal options available is limited. Fungal cells are eukaryotic cells, like our own cells. So molecules that kill fungus can also be harmful to us.

To make matters worse, many antifungals have also been rendered less effective thanks to rampant self-medication by patients, over-the-counter sales, and use in plant agriculture.

When fungi are repeatedly exposed to antifungal compounds in the environment, they develop resistance.

From her own experience at LVPEI, Dr. Joseph recalled how identifying pathogens has allowed her to help her clinician colleagues about when they can rely on an antifungal to work.

Limited understanding

Candida infections among a small group of fungal infections that have received sustained research attention.

Most fungus biologists in India use fungi as a model system to understand eukaryotic cell processes such as how genes are expressed in cells and how cells divide. But these experiments are done with baker's yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) and the results don't always lead to clinically relevant findings. That said, *Candida* is structurally similar to baker's yeast, and the technical know-how from one species can be translated to the other.

"Fungal cells exist morphologically in two forms – roundish forms called yeast and long filamentous forms called molds," Dr. Garg said. "India has many moldy infections due to pathogens like *Aspergillus* and *Fusarium*."

"We do not have enough people looking into the biology of filamentous fungi," Dr. Kaur added. "Even with *Candida*, basic questions like what turns this fungus, which is often found on human skin, suddenly pathogenic is not well-understood."

"We need to also study the fungus in its native state and understand its relationship with its host," Dr. Vasudevan said. He also highlighted the importance of skilled taxonomists who can painstakingly grow, identify, and maintain fungal cultures.

Just like the medical community, the wildlife biology community will also benefit from fungal expertise within the country because samples can't be out of the country, limiting access to skilled personnel elsewhere.

The good news is that researchers in India are working to identify priority fungal pathogens circulating within its borders, both including and beyond a list of species the World Health Organization released in 2022. They are also working to map antifungal resistance in pathogens in the environment and develop newer therapeutics such as antimicrobial peptides. Better-equipped hospitals are also training others in the medical community to pay attention to the fungal infection crisis.

(Somdatta Karak heads science communication at CSIR-CCMB. somdattakarak@ccmb.res.in)

An endangered Indian pangolin at an unknown location in 2016. AJIT HUILGOL (CC BY)

Scientists use DNA maps to find pangolin trafficking hubs

Vasudevan Mukunth

Pangolins are one of the world's most trafficked mammals even as their existence is threatened by shrinking habitats. So to protect them, conservationists are keen to know where they are being poached.

The problem is that it is notoriously difficult to trace a bag of scales seized from a smuggler in an airport back to a specific location. The DNA in these materials is also often degraded and thus amenable for further analysis.

Now, a study published in *PLoS Biology* on May 7 by an international team of researchers has offered a breakthrough. The team was able to use advanced genetic sequencing to map the trafficking routes of the three most-traded pangolin species: the white-bellied, the Sunda, and the Chinese pangolins.

To overcome the low DNA quality in seized materials, the researchers used a new approach where they targeted just the 671 locations on the pangolin genome that differentiate between different populations. This way, they were able to use 122 museum specimens to plug large gaps in the geography of where wild pangolins are now too rare.

Scientists were able to use advanced genetic sequencing to map the trafficking routes of the three most-traded pangolin species: the white-bellied, the Sunda, and the Chinese pangolins

Together with hundreds of more recent samples, the researchers put together an unprecedented new database covering the major locations of all eight pangolin species. According to the team, this database is a "genetic map" that state agencies can use to pinpoint the origin of a trafficked pangolin with high accuracy.

The researchers also revealed a complex relationship between local and international markets. Typically, experts have considered pangolin trafficking for local consumption and for 'export' to be independent problems – but the team's data revealed otherwise. According to the paper, in domestic trade, pangolins are moved 454 km on average from the source. However, the places that 'supply' pangolins to local markets also often overlap with those 'supplying' international traffickers.

The team also identified three international trafficking hotspots: southwestern Cameroon for white-bellied pangolins, southwestern Borneo for Sunda pangolins, and around Myanmar for Chinese pangolins.

"To our knowledge, this is the first population genomics study jointly addressing the three most traded species of pangolins," the team wrote in its paper. "Additionally, the geo-referenced DNA database presented in this study is unprecedented in sampling density and geographic scale, leading to detailed population genomic insights and informative domestic and international trade tracing estimates at a range-wide scale for each species."

Per the data, traffickers also collect the scales of various nearby populations before shipping them worldwide, primarily to China and Vietnam.

"International seizures in China seem to have originated both from outside and within the country, with evidence of a network from northeastern India around Arunachal Pradesh and Assam (and possibly Bhutan)," the researchers wrote.

The illegal wildlife trade is a multibillion-dollar transnational crime. Authorities, however, lacked the evidence required to nip the trade at the source. The new "genetic map" may change that.

For feedback and suggestions
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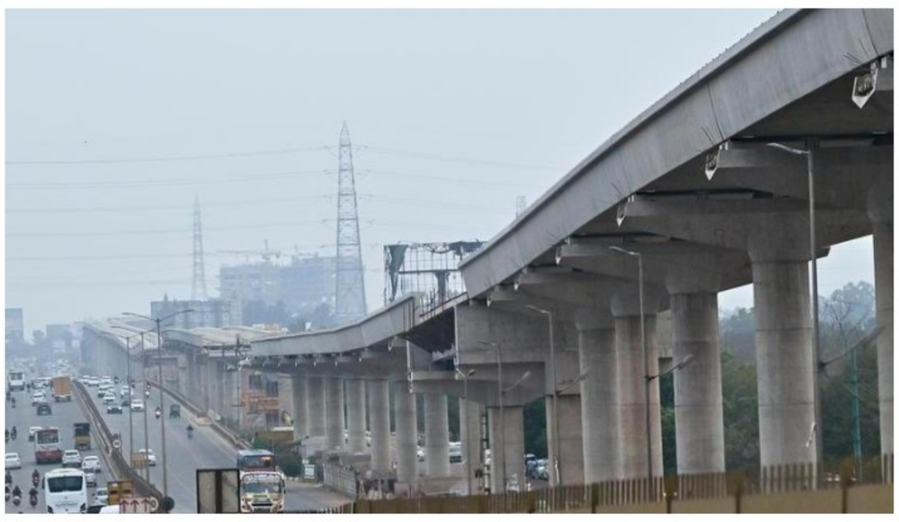
Namma Metro Blue Line can run fully on solar power: IISc study

BMRCL can install up to 30 MWp of rooftop solar capacity without any modifications to the existing traction infra, it notes

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A study by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has found that Bengaluru's upcoming Namma Metro Blue Line can potentially operate entirely on solar energy on a net annual basis, using only land and infrastructure already owned by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL).

The study, titled 'Assessing the Potential of Directly Using Solar Power to Run the Operations of Blue Line of Namma Metro', was conducted by the IISc Sustainable Transportation Lab in collaboration with BMRCL and supported by HSBC under its Corporate Social Responsibility programme. According to the report, the nearly 55-km Blue Line corridor connecting Central Silk Board and Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) under Metro Phases 2A and 2B can achieve full annual energy self-sufficiency through large-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) integration.



Researchers say the project represents the first corridor-scale techno-economic analysis in India examining direct integration of solar power into a metro rail traction system. FILE PHOTO

The researchers said that the project represents the first corridor-scale techno-economic analysis in India examining direct integration of solar power into a metro rail traction system. The report has already been submitted to BMRCL for consideration. The study was led by Ashish Verma, a professor from IISc's Department of Civil Engineering, along with a team of researchers from multiple departments. Conducted between August 2025 and March 2026, the research included modelling of the Blue Line's traction power requirements, solar resource mapping across BMRCL properties, and analysis of train operations under different scenarios.

According to the findings, an installed solar capacity of 83.3 MWp would be sufficient to meet the corridor's annual energy demand of 152 GWh under full-scale operations involving 21 trains running at two-minute intervals. Researchers estimated that BMRCL-owned properties, including station rooftops, elevated viaduct parapets, station canopies and depot rooftops, can accommodate between 79 MWp and 89 MWp of solar installations.

The report noted that BMRCL could immediately install up to 30 MWp of rooftop solar capacity without making any modifications to the existing traction infrastructure. This alone could offset around 36.5% of the corridor's annual electricity consumption.

Researchers highlighted station rooftops as the most commercially attractive starting point. All 30 elevated stations together offer around 109,600 square metres of usable rooftop space, capable of supporting nearly 50,000 solar panels with a combined capacity of 29.75 MWp. The estimated investment for this first phase ranges between ₹48 crore and ₹63 crore, but the study projects annual electricity savings of ₹36.4 crore from the first year itself, with a payback period of less than two years.

Second phase

The second phase proposes extending solar infrastructure to viaduct parapets and station side canopies, increasing the total installed capacity to about 54 MWp. This phase is expected to generate annual savings exceeding ₹61 crore, while cumulative savings over the project's lifetime could cross ₹2,600 crore. It also underlined the role of regenerative braking, which can recover around 29% of traction energy. When combined with rooftop solar generation, nearly 61% of the Blue Line's total traction energy demand could be offset. Apart from financial savings, the report emphasised significant environmental benefits. Phase 1 alone could prevent the emission of more than 44,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually, equivalent to removing nearly 19,000 petrol cars from Bengaluru's roads. Under the expanded Phase 2 scenario, annual carbon savings could rise to nearly 77,900 tonnes.

Prof. Verma said the study demonstrates that metro rail systems can evolve into net-zero energy transport systems using their own physical infrastructure. He described the Blue Line project as "ready-to-tender infrastructure investment" with long-term economic and environmental returns, and urged BMRCL and the Karnataka government to move towards pilot implementation without delay.

The report has recommended that BMRCL immediately tender rooftop solar installations across all 30 stations, undertake structural surveys of depots and viaducts, and begin regulatory engagement with Bescom and the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission for net metering approvals.

Heavy rain throws life out of gear in city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Several key stretches reported flooding following the downpour, leading to slow-moving traffic during peak evening hours. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Heavy rain that lashed Bengaluru on Monday evening led to 21 trees being uprooted and 46 branches falling across the city, while several areas reported flooding that slowed traffic movement.

As of 7.30 p.m., nine fallen trees and six branches were cleared, with 12 trees and 40 branches yet to be cleared, according to data from the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA).

Several key stretches witnessed flooding following the downpour, leading to slow-moving traffic during peak evening hours. The affected areas included Jayamahal Main Road, the stretch from Manyata Tech Park towards Outer Ring Road, near K.R. Pura Metro Station, Dommasandra towards Muthanallur Cross, Balagere, Airport Road, and from Gunjur towards Varthur.

Traffic congestion was also reported on GRT Junction towards Hosakote, Vaddarahalli towards Geddalahalli, Cauvery Junction towards Palace Cross, Udaya TV underpass towards Jayamahal Road, Kalyan Nagar towards Uttam Sagar Junction, Hennur Cross towards Vaddarapalya, due to water accumulation.

The rain, which began around 4 p.m., lasted for about 45 minutes. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) observation data recorded at 5.30 p.m., Bengaluru city received 24.2 mm, HAL Airport received 0.6 mm, and the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) received 4.7 mm of rainfall. As per data recorded by the Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority's Automatic Weather Station, GKVK received 40mm and Bengaluru received 23.5 mm rainfall till 5.30 p.m.

As of 7.30 p.m., nine fallen trees and six branches were cleared. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Flights

Many airlines also issued advisories stating that flight schedules could be impacted due to the rain. IndiGo said adverse weather over Bengaluru had affected operations. "We are closely monitoring the weather and doing our best to get you where you need to be, safely and smoothly," it said. Akasa Air also said severe weather conditions in Bengaluru had impacted certain flights across its network. KIA officials said one Air India Express flight was diverted to Chennai due to bad weather.

The maximum temperature at Bengaluru city was 34 degrees Celsius, at HAL Airport and KIA, the maximum temperature was 34.4 and 35 degrees Celsius respectively.

The forecast for the next 36 hours for Bengaluru and the neighbourhood states that there will be a partly cloudy, becoming generally cloudy sky towards afternoon.

"Light to moderate rain/thundershowers likely. Maximum and minimum temperatures are very likely to be around 33 degrees Celcius and 22 degrees Celcius respectively," IMD said.

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HIMACHAL PRADESH

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- Must have passed English language examination in 10th and 12th standard examination.
- Must have a valid score of Integrated Program in Management Aptitude Test (IPMAT) examination 2025 or 2026 conducted by IIM Indore/ IIM Bangalore DBE Entrance Test 2025 or 2026 / IIM Kozhikode BMS Aptitude Test 2025 or 2026 / IIT JEE Mains 2025 or 2026 / CUET (UG) General Test scores (i.e., only Section III) 2024 or 2025 or 2026.
- Candidates submitting multiple test scores will be considered based on their best score.

DURATION

4 Years (8 Semesters) with multiple exit options as per NEP 2020 | Certificate (1st Year) | Diploma (2nd Year) | Degree (3rd Year) | Honours (4th Year)

₹ APPLICATION FEES : ₹ 1,000 (Non-Refundable)

MERIT LIST PREPARATION : The final merit list will be prepared based on the test scores, 10th and 12th standard marks.

CONTACT DETAILS : Office No. : 01704-277313, 9950606596
Email id : ugadmissions@iimsirmaur.ac.in

For more details and application timeline

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Amount approved for development projects in Maharashtra

993.72 in crore. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said that the government approved development projects for six pilgrimage and heritage sites, including Bhimashankar Temple, Grishneshwar Temple, Ajinkyatara Fort. PTI

People abducted during attacks on schools in Nigeria

46 At least 46 people were kidnapped during attacks on three schools in southwest Nigeria's Oyo state last week, according to the Christian Association of Nigeria. Gunmen targeted multiple schools simultaneously, prompting authorities to temporarily shut nearby institutions. AFP

Age of the youngest Indian-origin Mayor elected in the U.K.

23 23-year-old Tushar Kumar has become the youngest Indian-origin Mayor in the U.K. after taking charge as Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood in eastern England. He said he hopes to focus on youth participation, community engagement and local public service during his term. PTI

Growth recorded in China's solar cell exports in April

60 in per cent. 60% growth was recorded in China's solar cell exports in April compared to a year earlier, data showed. China shipped solar products worth $3.12 billion, as strong demand from Southeast Asia and Africa continued despite exports easing from March's record highs. REUTERS

Body-worn cameras deployed by J&K traffic police

685 685 body-worn cameras have been deployed by the Jammu and Kashmir Traffic Police along with more than 350 modern enforcement vehicles to strengthen traffic monitoring and road safety across the Union Territory. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The warning signs in India's import bill

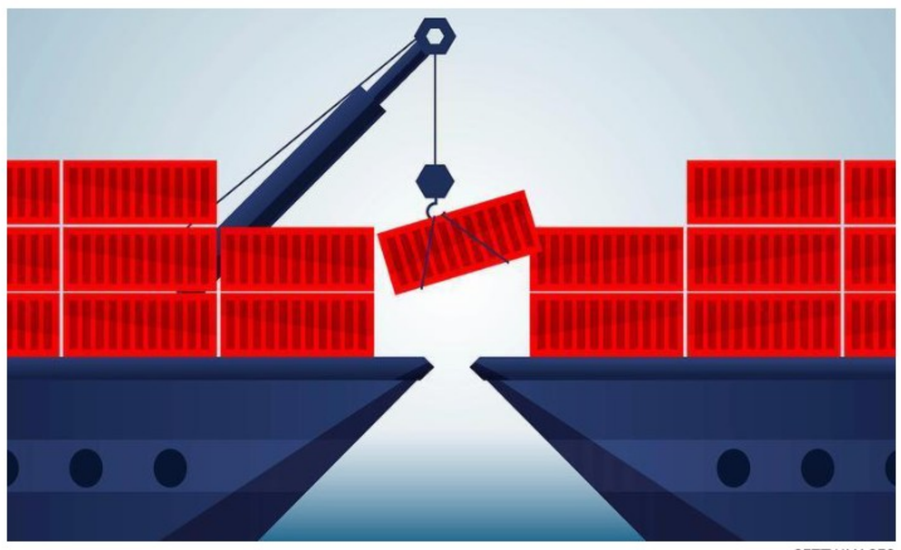
PM's appeal to reduce spending on petroleum products, edible oils, gold and foreign travel shows concern over India's import dependence; with foreign currency outgo increasing due to higher imports of crude oil, fertilizers, electronic components, pressure is mounting on foreign exchange reserves and the rupee

ECONOMIC NOTES

Biswajit Dhar

Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged citizens to reduce spending on petroleum products, cut edible oil consumption, delay non-essential gold purchases by a year, avoid unnecessary foreign travel, and prioritise the purchase of locally made products. He also advised increased use of public transport and electric vehicles, and called for the revival of Covid-era measures such as work-from-home, all aimed at reducing petrol and diesel consumption.

Mr. Modi's appeals have a singular focus – reducing the country's foreign currency spending. This is an alarm bell that no government has sounded before, not even during the severe economic crisis of 1991, when the country's foreign exchange reserves were less than $1 billion, barely enough to finance imports for a fortnight. The Reserve Bank of India was then forced to pledge the country's gold to the Bank of England, the Bank of Japan, and later to the Union Bank of Switzerland to avoid defaulting on international debt obligations.



GETTY IMAGES

A widening trade deficit

The Prime Minister's announcement seems to be in response to the delicate situation India is facing in its merchandise trade account. In 2025-26, India's merchandise trade deficit reached a record $333 billion, an increase of over 17% as compared to the immediately preceding year. The bulge in trade deficit was caused by imports rising 7% to an all-time high of $775 billion, while exports remained nearly stagnant at $442 billion.

Higher crude oil prices in the international market following the U.S.-Israel war against Iran are yet to be reflected in the import figures. According to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) crude oil price index, prices have risen by 53% since the war began. When these numbers are reflected in India's import bill, the situation could be really worrying. This could be the reason for the Prime Minister to press the alarm bell.

India's imports in 2025-26 were driven by four product groups – gold and silver, edible oils, fertilizers, and electronic components. Imports of precious metals, valued at over $90 billion, accounted for about 12% of the import bill, marking them the third largest product group in the import basket after crude oil and electronics. Overall imports of gems and jewellery increased by almost 25% over the previous year, with most of the increase driven by gold imports, which rose by 24%, and silver imports, which surged by 150%. Exports of gems and jewellery, on the other hand, declined by over 5%, indicating that the increased imports of the precious metals were mostly absorbed domestically.

Import dependence

The unprecedented rise in gold imports has continued into the new financial year, increasing by 82% in April 2026 compared to the year before. This raises the question of whether the Prime Minister's appeal to postpone non-essential gold purchases, along with last week's increase in customs duty on gold and silver imports to 15%, will be enough to arrest this upward trend.

The probability of lower gold imports may seem low, as continued stock market volatility has pushed retail investors into diversifying their portfolios by opting for both physical and gold ETFs. In fact, there are expectations that a higher import duty on physical gold will increase the shift towards ETF gold.

India's dependence on the international market for edible oils has been the most disappointing aspect of the country's agricultural performance. Edible oil imports increased by over 12% in 2025-26 and accelerated to 40% in April 2026 (over April 2025). These numbers are a pointer that import dependence on this critical commodity may have worsened. Imports accounted for over 56% of India's edible oil demand in 2023-24, the most recent year for which official data are available. Since the government has failed to find a way to increase domestic oilseed production, it needs citizens to reduce edible oil consumption to reduce imports, and thus save foreign currency.

Imports have brought bad news for agriculture. Spiralling fertilizer prices in international markets are not only causing the country to lose foreign currency due to its high import dependence, but they are also likely to raise the fertilizer subsidy bill. Globally, fertilizer prices increased by 46% between December 2025 and April 2026, while urea prices doubled during this period.

Over the past five years, fertilizer imports have met between 31% and 37% of India's requirements. However, this share is expected to exceed 50% in 2025-26 as urea imports increased by over 60%. Disruptions caused by the war in West Asia have pushed India's fertilizer import bill up by nearly 80% in 2025-26. As in the case of edible oil, it remains a mystery why domestic production was not ramped up to reduce foreign exchange outgo.

Pressure on the rupee

Though Mr. Modi has urged citizens to "prioritise Made in India products," the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, launched in 2020 to reduce dependence on Chinese imports, has not made much headway in several key industries. Even after six years and huge budgetary outlays under the PLI scheme, India remains significantly dependent on imports of electronic components, which grew by over 20% in the previous fiscal year.

Domestic production of accumulators and batteries was also to be stepped up to reduce the import content of electric vehicles, but in 2025-26, imports of these products increased by 50%. India's transition towards greater technological sophistication is thus coming at the cost of considerable foreign currency outgo.

Finally, a rising trade deficit could create another significant irritant as the already weakened rupee could slide further. Over the past several months, the RBI has been selectively intervening to prevent a free-fall of the currency. However, RBI needs to carefully calibrate its market interventions since foreign currency reserves have fallen by over $21 billion since the end of February 2026, and a further decline may not be prudent.

(Biswajit Dhar is former professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

THE GIST

- India's record merchandise trade deficit and rising import dependence have increased concerns over foreign currency outgo and pressure on the rupee.
- Increases in imports of gold, edible oils, fertilizers and electronic components have exposed the country's continued dependence on international markets.

Why has the WHO declared a PHEIC over Ebola outbreak?

What is Ebola? How is Ebola transmitted? What measures are being taken to contain the outbreak?

Ramya Kannan

The story so far :

On May 16, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda a 'public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). Just ahead of that, the Ministry of Public Health, Hygiene and Social Welfare, DRC, and the Uganda Ministry of Health declared an Ebola outbreak.

What is a PHEIC?

A PHEIC is the WHO's highest level of global health alert, formally declared under the International Health Regulations, whenever the health event is 'serious, sudden, unexpected, or unusual, and poses a public health risk to other countries through spread'. The declaration of the PHEIC also calls for a coordinated global response to tackle the current outbreak.

A new Ebola outbreak was notified in eastern DRC and Uganda, reportedly driven by the Bundibugyo ebolavirus strain. According to the WHO report, as of May 16, eight laboratory-confirmed cases, 246 suspected cases, and 80 suspected deaths have been reported in Ituri Province of the DRC. In addition, two laboratory-confirmed cases (including one death) with no apparent link to each other have been reported in Kampala, Uganda, within 24 hours of each other, among two individuals travelling from the DRC.

What is Ebola?

Ebola virus disease is a zoonotic disease that can be severe and often fatal in humans. It is caused by the eponymic Ebola virus, and has spilled over to humans from wild animals, including fruit bats and non-human primates, but is now capable of spreading between humans whenever there is direct contact with blood, secretion, bodily fluids of those infected, and even contaminated surfaces. According to the WHO, three different viruses are known to cause large Ebola disease outbreaks: Ebola virus, Sudan virus, and Bundibugyo virus. This current epidemic involves the last variant.

Ebola has been known since 1976, with most early outbreaks occurring in remote villages of Central Africa. However, things changed dramatically with the worst Ebola outbreak in history, which occurred in West Africa from 2014 to 2016, sweeping across Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, resulting in over 28,600 reported cases and 11,325 deaths.

But this outbreak served as a milestone turning point for the way in which the world treated Ebola; it catalysed unprecedented global support for research and development into vaccines for Ebola. As a result, there are two vaccines in the market that have been approved for Ebola, in a single and double dose regimen. Both are being used for targeted "ring vaccination" for all contacts and frontline workers dealing with the cases, as post-exposure prophylaxis. There are monoclonal-antibody treatments in the market that reportedly improve survival when given early to patients.

What measures are in place now?

The WHO-led response now focuses on several aspects including rapid isolation of a patient and immediate provision of intensive supportive care (rehydration, symptom management) to reduce mortality. But what will be crucial in actually containing this outbreak is to initiate rapid case tracing, contact tracing, ensuring safe burials, and establishing strict infection-control measures in all health facilities where people are being treated. The WHO's plan also includes deploying approved vaccines and monoclonal antibodies to at-risk groups wherever feasible. An essential part of the strategy, according to the global agency, is to launch social mobilisation campaigns to build trust, reduce stigma, and encourage early care-seeking among the people in the affected zones.

According to the WHO, "outbreak control relies on a package of interventions including intensive supportive care of patients, infection prevention and control, disease surveillance and contact tracing, laboratory services, safe and dignified burials, vaccination if relevant, and social mobilisation."

THE GIST

- WHO declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), its highest level of global health alert.
- The outbreak, driven by the Bundibugyo ebolavirus strain, has prompted rapid isolation, contact tracing, safe burials, vaccination, and monoclonal-antibody treatment.

Farmers' groups oppose Bidadi township project

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Activists say the region acts as an important agricultural belt supplying milk, fruits, vegetables and other essential produce to Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

Samyukta Horata - Karnataka, a coalition of farmers, workers, dalits and student groups, on Monday demanded that the Karnataka government immediately withdraw the proposed Bidadi Integrated Satellite Township project and cancel the ongoing land acquisition process for nearly 9,640 acres in Ramanagara district, alleging that the project would destroy fertile agricultural land and threaten the livelihoods of thousands of farmers.

Leaders of the organisation, along with affected farmers, said the project was "anti-farmer" and environmentally destructive. The land identified for acquisition is spread across 25 villages coming under Byramangala and Kanchugaranahalli gram panchayat limits in Bidadi hobli of Ramanagara district. The area comprises irrigated agricultural land and horticultural plantations growing crops such as coconut, arecanut, banana and mango, the farmers said. The activists said the region acts as an important agricultural belt supplying milk, fruits, vegetables and other essential produce to Bengaluru. They claimed that several farming families in the area have adopted mixed-cropping systems and established agriculture-linked small-scale industries, including arecanut plate manufacturing units, helping them sustain their livelihoods.

"The government cannot destroy such a sustainable rural economy through forced and unjust land acquisition," the farmers' representatives said.

The organisation alleged that more than 3,500 small and marginal farmers had already submitted written objections opposing the acquisition soon after the government issued a preliminary notification pertaining to the Bidadi Integrated Satellite Township project.

However, the protesters alleged that the State government had failed to consider or hear the objections raised by the farmers. They said farmers in the region have been protesting against the project in different forms for the past one-and-a-half years and have continued an indefinite dharna for over 428 days.

Despite the prolonged agitation, they alleged that the Cabinet approved the project without consulting the affected families.

Calling the move "authoritarian" and a violation of democratic rights, Samyukta Horata - Karnataka urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to immediately halt the acquisition process. Badagalapura Nagendra, a farmer leader, said that Bengaluru had already suffered due to unchecked urban expansion, with agricultural lands being converted into layouts and apartment complexes lacking adequate infrastructure. He claimed that several residential projects and sites remained vacant for years while the city continued to face rising temperatures and environmental stress. He urged environmentalists, writers, policymakers and citizens to oppose projects that would intensify ecological damage around the city.

Residents of Kaniminike BDA flats get bus service

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

Residents had long sought a bus service connecting the locality either to Kengeri, Majestic or a Metro station. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After a wait of almost 12 years, residents of the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) apartments at Kaniminike, located off the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway, finally got their first BMTC bus service, addressing their long-pending demand for better public transport connectivity to the area.

The new service will operate between Bidadi and Kengeri TTMC, passing through Hejjala Cross, Judicial Layout, the Kaniminike BDA Apartments (Phase 2), Kaniminike, Kumbalgodu, Anchepalya, Basavanagar and Kengeri Police Station before terminating at Kengeri TTMC.

Residents said the bus entering the apartment complex itself is a major relief, as the nearest bus stop was nearly 2 km away, leaving commuters to depend on autos and cabs that were difficult to access throughout the day.

"For years, poor last-mile connectivity had remained one of the biggest concerns for residents and prospective homebuyers in the locality," Asha, a resident, said. The apartment complex comprises around 1,500 flats, of which close to 500 are currently occupied.

Shashank Bharadwaj, a resident, said connectivity is one of the first issues potential buyers ask about, especially since the apartments, though close to the expressway, have remained poorly linked for the past 12 years. He added that bus connectivity up to Kengeri would help, as the locality has a private college, and many people from nearby Bhadrapura village work in the Kumbalgodu industrial area. Residents had long sought a bus service connecting the locality either to Kengeri, Majestic or a Metro station, he said.

Residents led survey

To support their demand, residents also conducted a survey among current occupants, covering 500 houses. The findings showed that nearly 40% of residents depend on public transport and do not own more than one two-wheeler. The survey also highlighted that women, senior citizens and college students were among the worst affected, with many having to walk long distances to access public transport.

Residents said they had repeatedly raised the issue with both the BDA and BMTC. Following this, BMTC has now introduced the service, which will initially operate during the morning peak hours between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. They said this was identified as the most critical travel window based on survey responses.

Residents also highlighted that they were earlier told that introducing a new service would be difficult, as BMTC estimated that the route could face nearly 10% operational loss due to insufficient passenger numbers.

However, with occupancy increasing and repeated requests from residents, a depot officer recently conducted a survey and found the demand to be genuine.

Patrol teams rescue two women in distress in separate incidents

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a swift response, the Hoysala patrolling teams rescued two women in distress in separate incidents reported on Saturday.

In the first incident, personnel attached to the K.R. Puram Police Station rescued a woman who allegedly attempted to end her life following a domestic quarrel. The police said a distress call was received through the Namma-112 helpline regarding a homemaker at Ayyappa Nagar who was attempting to end her life. The Hoysala-220 personnel reached the spot within nine minutes and rescued the woman.

In another incident, personnel attached to Tilak Nagar Police Station rescued an elderly woman who was found unconscious on the roadside in Jayanagar 5th Block. Following an alert, the Hoysala-208 staff rushed to the spot in eight minutes and rescued the woman.

(If you are in distress or having suicidal tendencies, please reach out to these 24/7 helplines: KIRAN at 1800-599-0019 or Arogya Sahayavani at 104 for help.)

ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಖಜಾಂಚಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಕರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ನಿಧಿ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಕ್ಷೇಮಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ನಿಧಿ, 'ಶಿಕ್ಷಕರ ಸದನ'
ಕೆ. ಜಿ. ರಸ್ತೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು–560002.

ಸಂ.: ಶಿ.ಕ.ನಿ./ಲೆ.ಶಾ./ಎ.ಟಿ.ಎಂ./158/2024-25 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11.05.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಕೆ.ಜಿ.ರಸ್ತೆ, ಕಾವೇರಿ ಭವನದ ಎದುರು. ಇರುವ ಶಿಕ್ಷಕರ ಸದನ ಕಟ್ಟಡದ ಆವರಣದ **ನೆಲಮಹಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 113.44 ಚ.ಅಡಿಗಳ ಜಾಗವನ್ನು ಎ.ಟಿ.ಎಂ.ಗೆಂದು** ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, **ಸದರಿ ಜಾಗವನ್ನು ಬಾಡಿಗೆಗೆ ನೀಡುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ** ಆಸಕ್ತ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ಗಳಿಂದ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ಗಳು **KPP Portal** ವಿಳಾಸ: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಮುಖಾಂತರ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18.05.2026 ರಿಂದ 03.06.2026 ರ** ಅವಧಿಯೊಳಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 03.06.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆ** ಆಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಹಾಗೂ ಪ್ರಭಾರಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಕರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ನಿಧಿ

DIPR/CP/720/SA/2026-27

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the General Public that my client **Y.MUDDU KRISHNA REDDY** S/o Dhoddi Reddy Yeddalacheruvu, aged about 47 years, residing at No.158, 2nd Cross, Lakhsmi Layout Vittasandra Main Road, Begur, Bangalore-560 0114 has lost the original Sale Deed dated:09.03.11994, vide Document No. 5487/1993-94, Book-I, Volume 3857, Pages 92-96, registered in the office of the Sub Registrar, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore which is executed by Sri.N.Subramanya Naidu in favour of Smt.B.T.Thangamma and same was lost on 04.05.2026, while travelling in Begur and I tried to trace out same but failed to trace out the same and my client has lodged a complaint on 15.05.2026 before Begur Police, Bangalore.

If anyone finding the above original title deed is requested to hand over the same to the undersigned within **seven (7) days** from hereof and my client will assure of appropriate reward to such person:

M.R.REVANNA, Advocate
No.264, 1st Floor, Behind Ganesh Temple
Begur Road, Bommanahalli
Bangalore-560068. Ph: 99806 28324

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that our clients **Mr.MAHMOOD VASIM** S/o Syed Kaleemulla, Aadhaar No. 4462 9339 5435, residing at No.1082, 15th Cross, near AMC Hospital, HBR Layout, 3rd Block, 1 st Phase, Bagngalore-560043, represents that the Last page i.e., Page No.11 of the Original Sale deed dated 02.02.2002 and Document No.13283/2001-02, in the office of the Sub Registrar Krishnarajapuram, executed by **Sri.G.Ramakrishna** to in favour of Sri.Mahmood Vasim, in respect to the **SCHEDULE PROPERTY** mentioned hereunder is lost/misplace and not traceable.

If anybody other than the said Mr.MAHMOOD VASIM has any claim, right, title and interest on the **SCHEDULE PROPERTY** by virtue of being in possession or otherwise of the above said Original Documents, or any Rights they should file their claim with documentary proof within **SEVEN DAYS** from the date of issuance of this Public Notice in our office, at the address mentioned below, failing which, it will be taken for granted that nobody has any manner of right, title, interest or claim over the SCHEDULE PROPERTY other than the said Mr.MAHMOOD VASIM.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

The Property bearing **Site No.1082,** Present Katha No.1062/1057/1082, PID No.6329248142 formed by BDA, Situated at **Hennur Bellary Road Layout (HBR Layout) 1st Phase, 3rd Block, Bangalore,** measuring East to West **40 feet** and North to South **30 feet,** totally measuring **1200 Sq.feet** and is bounded on:

East by : Private Property;
West by : Road;
North by : Property No.1083;
South by : Property No.1081;

C.V.Nagendra, Advocate,
Unit No.101, 1st Floor, No.663,
Post office Road, Opp: to Karnataka Bank,
K.R.Puram, Bangalore-560036.
Place:- Bangalore Date:-19.05.2026

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BINOD Kumar, residing at F702, Kolte Patil Raaga,Kannur,Bengaluru, Karnataka–560077 hereby declare that I have changed the name of my minor daughter from KEOSHA to KEOSHA MAHTO and she shall hereafter be known as KEOSHA MAHTO for all purposes.

I, A.JANAKI Reddy W/o K.Janardham Reddy R/at No.2489/A, 3rd Block, Shivanandi, Byrappa Road 1st Main, 2nd Cross Near Reliance Mart, Muddinpalya Road "D" Group Layout Vishwaneedam Post, Bengaluru-560091, I hereby declare and Change my minor daughter's name from K.Nityaja Reddy to K.Vihani Rashmi Reddy for all legal purposes, vide affidavit dated 14/05/2026 sworn before Notary Venkataswamy, Kolar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE HONB'LE XIII ASST CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT CHENNAI
O.S. No. 4907 of 2019

M/s.NRS Systems & Technologies Pvt. Ltd ... Plaintiff
Vs.
Seabird Tourists ... Defendant

To,
Seabird Tourist, No.2938/L32,
Shop No.12, Bangalore-Nilgiri Road,
Fivelight Circle, Mysuru,
Karnataka - 570 001.

Take notice that by order dated 22.04.2026, the Hon'ble XIII Asst. City Civil Judge was pleased to order service of summon in I.A No.4 of 2026 on you through substituted service by way of paper publication returnable by 15.06.2026. Kindly make it convenient to appear, either in person or through counsel, on 15.06.2026 at 10:30am, failing which the matter will be decided in your absence.

N. ALAFIYA - ADVOCATE
1st Flr, 23/12, Vyasar St., T.Nagar, Ch-600017.

TENDERS

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Email: travancoresugars65@gmail.com
Website: www.travancoresugars.com

TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders (https://etenders.kerala.gov.in) are invited for Supply of IMFL Label for Pasting on Jawan XXX rum-1000 Ml Pet Bottles.

E-tender ID
2026_TSC_851488
Last Date of Submission is -
23.05.2026 at 4.00 PM.
For more details contact office/website.

Thiruvalla Sd/-
16.05.2026 GM (i/c)

Oushadhi
The Pharmaceutical Corporation (I.M.) Kerala Ltd.
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking)
Kuttanellur, Thrissur-14.
Ph: 0487-2459807, 2459843

Re-Tender / Re-E-Tender Notice

P/07/2026-27 19.05.2026

Re-Tender and Re-E-Tenders are invited from eligible bidders for the Supply of Containers & Packing Materials and Raw Materials. You can download tender documents from **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in & www.oushadhitender.com.** For more details visit **www.oushadhi.org** or contact Purchase Department.

(Sd/-) Managing Director

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I KARNATAKA
4th Floor, Telephone House, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengalure-560001

FORM No.14
[See Regulation 33(2)]By Regd. A/D, Dasti failing which by Publication.
DEMAND NOTICE
NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS AND BANKRUPTCY ACT 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 as amended

RC/548/2025 **09-12--2025**

Bank of Baroda
Versus
SRI RAMACHANDRA REDDY B M.

In the Matter of:
(CH-1): Bank of Baroda Patrenahalli Branch, Behind MPCS Bulding, Patrenahalli Village, Chikkaballapura Taluk and District, Karnataka ...Applicant(s)

Versus

To:
(CD-1) Sri Ramchandra Reddy S/o Sri B M Munishyamappa, R/At Bannikuppe Village, Agalagurkhi Post, Chikkaballapura Taluk and District-562101.
(CD-2) Smt Rathnamma W/o B M Ramchandra Reddy, R/At Bannikuppe Village, Agalagurkhi Post, Chikkaballapura Taluk and District-562101.
(CD-3) Sri Nagaraj.P.T S/o P.N.Thimmarayappa, R/At Patrenahalli Village, Chikkaballapura Taluk and District, Karnataka
(CD-4) Sri R.Girish S/o B M Ramchandra Reddy, R/At Bannikuppe Village, Agalagurkhi Post, Chikkaballapura Taluk and District-562101, Karnataka
(CD-5) Sri R.Harish S/o B M Ramchandra Reddy, R/At Bannikuppe Village, Agalagurkhi Post, Chikkaballapura Taluk and District-562101, Karnataka
...Defendant(s)

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, **DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALURU (DRT 1) in OA/478/2020** an amount of **Rs.36,65,498/- (Rupees Thirty Six Lakhs Sixty Five Thousands Four Hundred Ninety Eight Only)** out of which the sum of:-

(i) Rs.12,79,160/- (Rupees twelve lakh seventy nine thousand one hundred sixty only) in Loan Account No.029413031073 along with interest at the rate of 14.50% per annum as on 31.01.2020 being the amount due together with current and future interest@6%p.a.;
(ii) Rs.1,52,103/- (Rupees one lakh fifty two thousand one hundred three only) along with interest @ 11.25% per annum as on 31.01.2020 being the amount due together with current and future interest @6%per annum
(iii) Rs.97,939/- (Rupee ninety seven thousand nine hundred thirty nine only) along with interest @11.25% per annum as on 31.01.2020 being the amount due together with current and future interest @6%per annum
(iv) Rs.21,36,296/- (Rupees twenty one lakh thirty six thousand two hundred ninety six only) along with the interest at the rate of 11.50% per annum as on 31.01.2020 being the amount due together with current and future interest @6%per annum , w.e.f. **04/03/2020** till realization and costs of **Rs.80,000/-(Rupees Eighty Thousands Only)** has become due against you (Jointly and severally/ Fully/Limited).

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts & Bankruptcy act, 1993.
3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing.
4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on **30.01.2026 at 10:30 am** for further Proceedings
5. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:
(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate / execution proceedings.
(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date: **19.12.2025**

Sd/- P.H.Hemanth Kumar, IRS, Recovery Officer-II

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଶକ୍ତି ସଂଚାରଣ ନିଗମ ଲିଃ
(ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଏକ ଉପକ୍ରମ)
OPTCL Lifeline of Odisha
ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Regd. Office: OPTCL Tech Tower, Janpath, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-Tender No.	Tender Description:	Estimated Cost
CPC-13/2026-27	Selection of agency for providing services of Manpower (DEO & Attendant) on contract (Outsourced) basis to OPTCL. **Last Date & Time of Submission of Bid: 03.06.2026 upto 17:30 P.M.**	Rs. 2,60,75,008/-
CPC-14/2026-27	Selection of agency for providing services of Manpower (Misc.) on contract (Outsourced) basis to OPTCL. **Last Date & Time of Submission of Bid: 27.05.2026 upto 17:30 P.M.**	Rs. 69,00,083/-
CPC-15/2026-27	Providing catering services at Transit House, Bhubaneswar & Guest House Puri, OPTCL. **Last Date & Time of Submission of Bid: 29.05.2026 upto 17:30 P.M.**	Rs. 38,19,637/-

Complete set of bidding documents are available at **www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** and **www.optcl.co.in**.

/optcl.odisha /optcl_odisha **HIPR-13/2026-27**

E-Mail : sencrwangul@yahoo.co.in; Ph. No.06764-236404

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, ANGUL
NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR ROAD WORKS IN ODISHA
Bid Identification No. Road Online AGL-03/2026-27

No. 1630 // Dt. 12/5/26 //

1. Name of the Work : **Road Works**
2. Total No. of Work : **15 Nos.**
3. Estimated Cost : **Rs.107.21 to Rs.641.90 Lakhs (Approx.)**
4. Class of Contractor : **As per annexure**
5. Period of Completion : **As per annexure**
6. Other details

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding From	To	Last Date & Time of seeking tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Angul	Road Online -AGL-03/2026-27	25.05.2026 at 10.00 A.M.	17.06.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.	16.06.2026 up to 1.00 P.M.	18.06.2026 at 10.00 A.M.	Will be intimated separately

For detailed Notice Inviting Tenders, Please visit to the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Angul.
25001/161/2627 OIPR-25001/25180/1/26-27/0003

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : SUNDARGARH
AT/PO-SANKARA, SUNDARGARH-770020, E-mail address-serw_sundargarh@yahoo.com

No.Tender Online – RWCCESNG–05 of 2026-27, Letter No.2833/Dtd.14/05/2026
e-Procurement NOTICE

1. Type of the Work : **Roads (MMSY)**
2. Class of Contractor : As specified in the column-6 of the Annexure
3. Time of Completion : As specified in the column-5 of the Annexure
4. Detail Projects : As per Annexure attached
5. Estimated Cost : As specified in the column-4 of the Annexure
6. Other details:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From	To	Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of tender Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh	RWCCESNG-05 of 2026-27	25.05.2026 11:00 AM	16.06.2026 5:00 PM	12.06.2026 5:00 PM	17.06.2026 11:00 AM	Will be intimated separately

● Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh.
25001/170/2627 OIPR-25001/25133/1/26-27/0007

KARNATAKA SILK INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
3rd & 4th Floors, Public Utility Building, M.G. Road, Bengaluru – 560 001
Ph: 080- 25586550/25586402, Email: info@ksicsilk.com

No. KSIC/PR/ITEMS-W/01/2026-27 Date:18.05.2026

RE-TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

Re-Tenders are invited through KPP Portal from Manufacturers/Dealers/Contractors for the below detailed items & work:

Sl. No.	Particulars	EMD (In Rs.)	Pre Bid Meeting Date	Last Date uploading the Tender	Technical Bids Opening Date
1	**Re Tender** for Supply of Lifebuoy Neem & Aloevera Flavor or Equivalent Brand Bar soap - 5400 Nos (125 Grm Each) / Supply of Lifebuoy Pro Plus/ Gem Protection or Equivalent Brand hand wash- 180 Cans (5 Ltr Can Each) / Supply of Harpic Power Plus 10x Advanced 5 Min action or Equivalent Brand- 96 Liters (1 Ltr Can Each)	6,500	-	03.06.2026 @03.00PM	04.06.2026 @03.30PM
2	**Re Tender** for Job Work For Stitching Of 500 Nos Silk Kurthas With Neck Embroidery, Ksic Logo And Size On The Collar (Including Ksic Design Box With Label Mentioning The Size, Colour And Price)	6,000	-	04.06.2026 @03.00PM	05.06.2026 @03.30PM
3	**Re-Tender** for Supply of 600 Kgs of Sara Guard 2875 for KSIC, SWF, Mysuru Unit	17,000	-	27.05.2026 @03.00PM	29.05.2026 @03.30PM
4	**Re- Tender** for Liaisoning and Transportation of 153 MT's per month 'C' Grade Steam Coal from mines of M/s. Singareni Collieries Company Limited, Hyderabad to KSIC units at Mysuru and T Narasipura for a period of one year.	2,21,000	22.05.2026 @11.00 AM	29.05.2026 @03.00PM	30.05.2026 @03.30PM
5	**Re-Tender** for Replacing of Aeration Pipe Lines,Water Lines, Suction Pipe Lines and Railings in CETP & Supply, Installation of 4 Nos. of Magnetic Inflow Meter for CETP at SWG, Mysuru Unit - I.	13,000	-	03.06.2026 @03.00PM	04.06.2026 @03.30PM

Tender Documents, details of the Notification, schedule terms & conditions can be downloaded from **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Further details can be had from the office of the Undersigned during working hours or KPP Portal - helpdesk-080-46010000 and 080-68948777.

Sd/-
GENERAL MANAGER(Proc)
DIPR/CP/JA/635/2026-27

CACHE

Strengthening domestic energy security through decentralised bioenergy systems

India's energy security concerns are increasing focus on converting agricultural residue, food waste, sewage sludge, and organic municipal waste into reliable and commercially viable energy solutions; technologies such as gasification and anaerobic digestion are emerging as critical pathways

Ankur Jain

Global energy supply chains continue to face uncertainty and fuel prices remain vulnerable to international disruptions. The importance of strengthening domestic energy security has become more urgent for countries like India.

Interestingly, while the country continues to search for scalable and sustainable energy alternatives, one of its largest untapped resources already exists within its own waste streams. Every year, enormous volumes of agricultural residue, food waste, sewage sludge, and organic municipal waste are generated, much of which remains underutilised or poorly managed.

This creates an important intersection between two major national challenges: energy security and waste management. What is often treated purely as a disposal problem can also become a valuable energy resource when supported by the right technology and infrastructure ecosystem. The real question, therefore, is not whether India has the resource base. It is whether the country can build efficient systems capable of converting waste into reliable and commercially viable energy solutions at scale.

Gasification is particularly effective for dry biomass such as crop residue, husk, woody waste, and other solid organic materials. GETTY IMAGES

Between waste and energy

India produces nearly 750 million tonnes of agricultural biomass a year, of which around 230 million metric tonnes is estimated to be surplus biomass. If collected and processed efficiently, this mass alone has the potential to offset a meaningful share of India's fossil fuel dependence, with some estimates suggesting it could replace nearly one-third of fuel imports. However, converting biomass into usable energy is complex.

Unlike conventional fuels, biomass is highly inconsistent in nature. Moisture levels vary, density differs across feedstocks, and ash content can fluctuate significantly. This affects combustion efficiency, transport economics, emissions performance, and industrial reliability. Most energy systems require stable and predictable fuel inputs, which raw biomass often can't provide on its own.

As a result, the focus is increasingly on technologies that can convert waste into cleaner, more manageable, and energy-efficient forms. This is where solutions like gasification and anaerobic digestion are becoming important.

In many ways, these technologies are the bridge between raw waste and usable energy infrastructure. Instead of treating waste as a low-value byproduct, they help convert it into commercially viable fuels and energy carriers that can integrate into existing industrial and energy systems.

Versatile syngas

Gasification is particularly effective for dry biomass such as crop residue, husk, woody waste, and other solid organic materials.

Inside a gasifier, the feedstock is dried, pyrolised (broken down by heat), partially oxidised, and then reduced. In this process, biomass breaks down into gases, biochar, and tars. A limited amount of oxygen is introduced – not enough for complete combustion but enough to sustain reactions between carbon, steam, and carbon dioxide at 800-1,000 °C. The outcome is syngas, which is made of carbon monoxide, hydrogen, carbon dioxide, and smaller amounts of methane and other gases.

Syngas is valuable because it is versatile. It can be used directly to generate heat or power or can be upgraded into renewable methane, methanol, ethanol, and even hydrogen depending on downstream applications. This flexibility makes gasification one of the more promising pathways within advanced bioenergy systems and explains why it is increasingly becoming central to future-ready clean fuel ecosystems.

Beyond generating energy, the process also produces biochar, a carbon-rich material that can improve soil quality and help sequester carbon. It also creates opportunities within emerging carbon credit markets.

As a result, the value created extends beyond energy alone, contributing to broader environmental and agricultural sustainability outcomes.

Anaerobic digestion

While gasification is more suitable for dry biomass, wet organic waste requires a different treatment pathway. This is where anaerobic digestion is highly relevant. The technology is particularly suited for sewage, food waste, animal manure, and industrial organic waste streams.

In this process, microorganisms break down waste in the absence of oxygen to produce biogas, which consists mainly of methane and carbon dioxide. The process also produces nutrient-rich digestate that can be used as a soil amendment if managed effectively.

This is why anaerobic digestion is relevant across urban waste systems, sewage networks, dairy clusters, food processing units, industrial campuses, and even large-scale canteens, where wet waste is generated consistently. At smaller scales, it can support rural and semi-urban communities.

However, unlike thermal systems, anaerobic digestion depends on a continuous biological process. This means feedstock should be available in sufficient quantities to ensure long-term operational efficiency and reliable round-the-clock output.

Decentralised energy

This is also why the larger opportunity for India may not lie in choosing one technology over another but in integrating them intelligently. Gasifiers are designed for dry waste while anaerobic digestion works best with wet waste. Together, they create a more complete solution aligned with the diversity of India's waste landscape.

Matching the right feedstock with the right technology and right outcome is also essential because forcing wet waste into gasifiers or dry biomass into digesters reduces efficiency and increases operational challenges.

Such an approach also strengthens the case for decentralised energy systems. India does not only need large centralised plants. It also requires smaller distributed systems that can support rural industries, agro-processing clusters, MSMEs, and waste-heavy regions where transporting biomass over long distances is economically inefficient. Localised energy systems can convert local waste into local energy, lowering fuel costs while improving energy access and waste management outcomes.

For this ecosystem to scale effectively, policy support is crucial. Segregating waste at source, decentralised infrastructure development, stronger carbon markets, and long-term regulatory clarity will all influence the pace of adoption. Without proper segregation, neither gasification nor anaerobic digestion can achieve their full potential. Similarly, without policy certainty, investors and operators often hesitate to commit capital at scale.

Not a single technology

Initiatives such as the Government of India's Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) scheme have already demonstrated how biomass can be converted into biogas and upgraded into compressed biogas, a renewable methane alternative increasingly replacing natural gas across applications. At the same time, where the objective is to produce ethanol, methanol or hydrogen, syngas is emerging as a critical pathway.

In many ways, bioenergy is not a single technology trying to solve every challenge. It is a broader umbrella of technologies, each serving different end uses based on feedstock type and energy needs.

Ultimately, India's energy future cannot rely only on imported fuels and conventional energy systems. The country already possesses a large and underutilised resource base in the form of waste. The challenge now lies in building the right technologies, infrastructure, and policy ecosystems.

(Ankur Jain is Managing Director of Ankur Scientific, Vadodara)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"Hi! Why are you walking like that? Is there something wrong?"

"Yes, it's my back, I'm afraid. It's playing up again."

"What did you play?"

"When you say that some part of your body is 'playing up', it means that it is causing problems. This is ....."

"Oh, so what you're saying is that you have a back problem."

"I guess you could say that."

"I see. Can I say my grandmother's leg is playing up again?"

"You can. What's wrong with the leg?"

"I think it has something to do with the weather. It's been raining nonstop...."

"The weather could be the reason why my back is playing up too."

"But tell me, is this expression used with parts of the body alone?"

"....'play up' can be used with machines and instruments as well. For example, I can say, our telephone is playing up again."

"Meaning the telephone is not working properly. The telephones in our city play up whenever there is a slight drizzle."

"You have a point there. I'd better take the car to the mechanic. It's playing up."

"Didn't you have it repaired last week?"

"I did. But...."

"...nothing ever gets fixed, does it?"

"Nothing ever gets fixed. Venkat recommended the mechanic that I..."

"...Venkat! Is it true that he called your Chairman 'a dirty old man'?"

"Yes. Poor Venkat, the incident is being played up by everyone."

"Played up, again?"

"When you play something up, you make it out to be much more important than what it actually is."

"Isn't this what all newspapers do? Last week, for example, all the local newspapers played up the divorce story."

"So true. People seem to be very interested in the private life of a movie star. When I went to visit my cousin last week, my mother told me not to let her play up her illness."

"I don't know why so many people exaggerate their illness. Tell me, we have the expression, 'play up'. Is there an expression 'play down'?"

"There definitely is. It means the exact opposite of 'play up'."

"I see. So, when you play down something, it means that you reduce the importance of someone or something?"

"Exactly!"

"The Government is trying to play down its recent loss in the local elections. How does that sound?"

"Sounds great. Namrata tried to play down her role in the scandal."

"What's her brother Janardhan up to?"

"The last time I saw him he was playing at being a chef."

"Playing at? Isn't it wrong to say that?"

"When someone 'plays at being' someone or something, they pretend to be that someone or something."

"Little kids do this all the time."

"Exactly! They pretend all the time."

"I played at being a pilot when I was young. How does that sound?"

"Good!"

"Does Janardhan still play tennis?"

"Let's just say he plays at tennis."

"That is definitely wrong."

"No, it isn't. When you 'play at' something, you don't do it seriously. You are merely pretending to do it. For example, in yesterday's match, most of the players were playing at batting."

"They were just pretending to bat. Another case of match fixing?"

"Don't say that. The press will play it up again."

Published in The Hindu on August 29, 2000

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The Indian rupee has been in the news frequently over the last few weeks, having hit a new low of 96.27 against the U.S. dollar on Monday. How well do you know the rupee?

Radhika Santhanam

QUESTION 1
The motif of which satellite is present on the ₹2,000 banknotes?

QUESTION 2
Which national emblem is featured on all the banknotes?

QUESTION 3
When did Mahatma Gandhi first appear on banknotes, and what was the occasion?

QUESTION 4
This denomination of currency, mostly used by businessmen and traders for high-value transactions, was introduced during the British Raj and permanently withdrawn from circulation by the Morarji Desai government. Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan wanted to reintroduce it, but the idea was shelved. What denomination was it?

QUESTION 5
Which denomination shows the Konark Sun Temple?

Visual Question:
Identify this location and also the denomination on which it is found. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Which is the world's largest museum and research complex? **Ans: The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC**

2. When was Indian Museum in Kolkata established and by which body? **Ans: 1814 by the Asiatic Society of Bengal**

3. Name the largest museum in the world dedicated to a single civilisation. **Ans: Grand Egyptian Museum on the Giza Plateau**

4. In which Indian State capitals can one marvel at the Didarganj Yakshi and reliefs and sculptures? **Ans: Patna and Chennai**

5. One of the weirdest in the world was established in 1992 by Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak. What is the theme? **Ans: Sulabh International Museum of Toilets**

6. One of the most visited museums located in a European capital takes its name from the native name for the grand boulevard where the building is located. **Ans: Museo Nacional del Prado (National Museum of the Meadow) in Madrid**

7. Name the painting that is located directly opposite the Mona Lisa. **Ans: Paolo Veronese's The Wedding Feast at Cana**

Visual: In which museum can one marvel at this famous Leonardo da Vinci painting titled 'Lady with an Ermine'? **Ans: Czartoryski Museum in Kraków**

Early Birds: Dodo Jayaditya | Barnali Biswas | Soumendra Banerjee | Pranab Biswas | Sunil Madhavan

Word of the day

Bombast:
pompous or pretentious talk or writing

Synonyms: rhetoric, exaggeration, rant

Usage: *The speech was full of bombast but said very little.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/bombast

International Phonetic Alphabet: /bɒmbæst/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Founder's Day at MVJ College of Engineering

BENGALURU: MVJ College of Engineering celebrated Founder's Day on Sunday, marking the 98th birth anniversary of its founder, M.V. Jayaraman. The event paid tribute to Dr. Jayaraman's contributions to engineering education. Higher Education Minister Dr. M.C. Sudhakar was the chief guest. Also present was M.J. Mohan, chairman of MVJ Medical College and Research Hospital and secretary of the Venkatesha Education Society.

A total of 210 achievers were honoured with cash prizes amounting to ₹10 lakh. The event marked the introduction of the Prof. S.C. Gupta Award in recognition of the contributions of S.C. Gupta to the Department of Aeronautical Engineering.

₹4 lakh stolen from farmer's scooter

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A farmer lost ₹4 lakh of cash after thieves allegedly stole the money from his scooter while he was visiting a bank in Parappana Agrahara on Saturday. The victim, identified as 49-year-old R. Srinivas, a resident of Electronics City Phase-1, had brought the cash to deposit it in a bank account.

According to the police, Srinivas, along with his younger brother Manjunath, left home around 11 a.m. the same day with the cash. They first visited a gold loan firm to get back their mother's necklace, which Srinivas had earlier pledged. The staff allegedly advised them to make the payment online.

Later, they visited a bank in Parappana Agrahara to inquire about depositing the money. Srinivas parked the scooter outside the bank and went inside to make enquiries. On returning, he found the scooter dickey open and the cash missing.

The complainant checked CCTV footage from cameras installed nearby. The footage allegedly showed two men opening the scooter seat around 12.10 p.m. and stealing the cash. A case has been registered.

SBI Operations Support
Partner for Optimal Operations

SBOSS, 2nd Floor, Madhuli Building, Shiv Sagar Estate,
Dr. Annie Besant Road, Worli, Mumbai - 400018.
E-mail: support@sboss.net.in | **Website:** https://sboss.net.in

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

REF NO: SBOSS/RFP/PPSC/2026-27/007

Applications are invited by State Bank Operations Support Services Pvt. Ltd. (SBOSS) from eligible applicants for Engagement to provide Payroll Processing & Statutory Compliance Related to Payroll Processing Services. Detailed RFP is available on **https://sboss.net.in/Corporate Governance/Notice**. Last date and time for submission of proposal is 06.06.2026, 17:00 Hrs.

Place: Mumbai
Date: 19.05.2026
Chief Operating Officer
SBOSS

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that Sri. PATHI RAVI KUMAR, S/o Sri. P. Rajagopal, residing at Flat No.207, My Home Nava Dweepa, Near Hitex City, Madhapur Village, Rangareddy District, Telangana State, has lost/misplaced the Original Sale Deed dated 8.07.1994, registered as **Document No.1953/1994-95** of Book-I, pertaining to **Sy.No.55/3**, measuring 18 guntas, situated at Addeviswanthapura Village, Hesaraghatta Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, and a police complaint is filed before Bengaluru City Police Unit and a Lost Report bearing No.2052420/2026 dated 09.02.2026 has been obtained to that effect.

Finder may return the Original Sale Deeds pertaining to the aforesaid site to the undersigned. If any person/institution has any claim or interest of any nature pertaining to aforesaid property, the said claims alongwith supporting documents shall be filed within 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice before the undersigned at the address mentioned below. Any claims raised thereafter shall not be entertained or binding.

P. MANJUNATH, Advocate
HM LEGAL, Office at No.24/10, First Floor,
Haudin Road, Ulsoor, Bengaluru-560 042
Mobile No: 99450 36969
Phone No: 080 – 48145789

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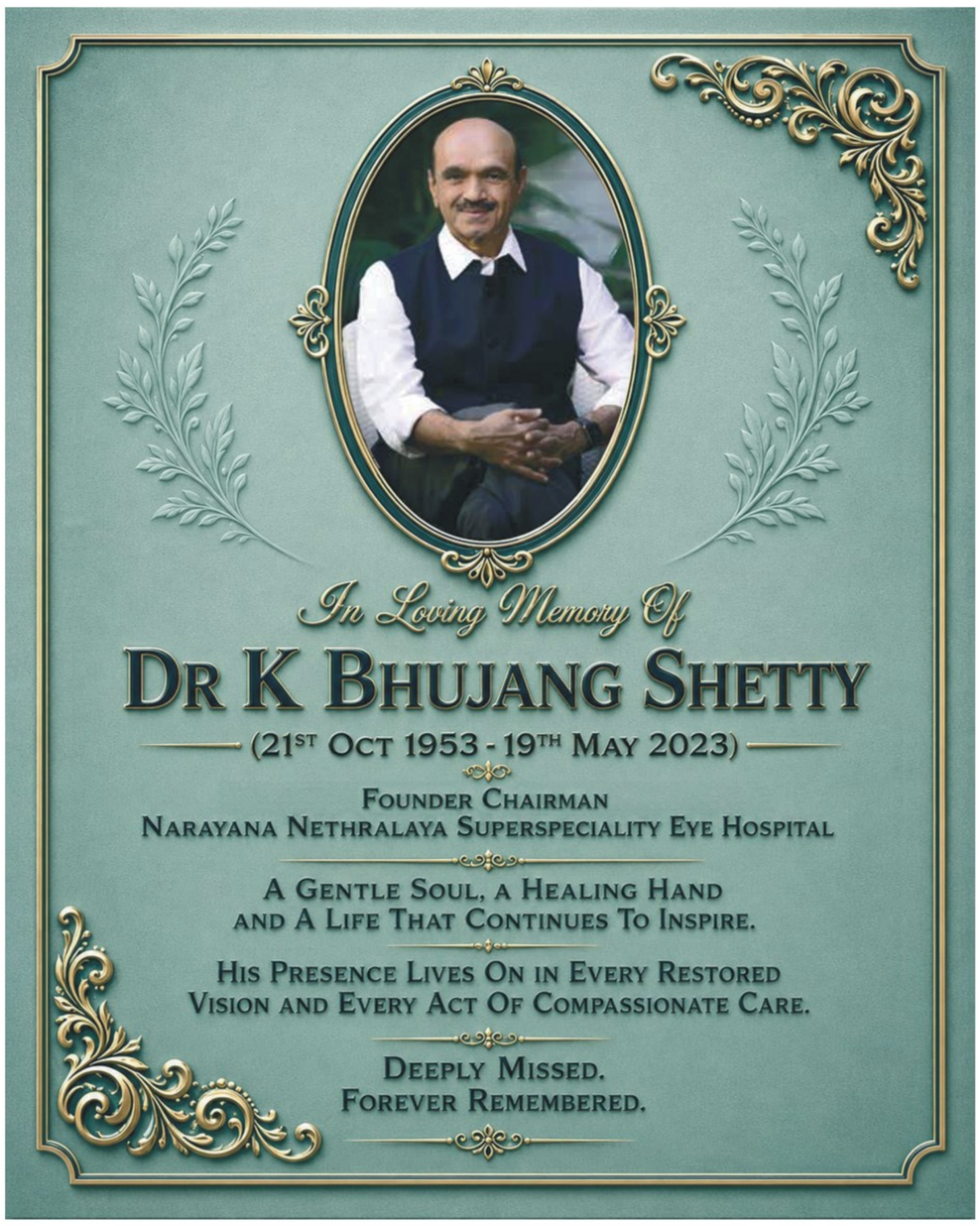

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*Source: ABC July-Dec. 2025

23rd & 24th May 2026
(Saturday & Sunday)

National College Jayanagara Ground
2nd Main Road, 7th Block, Near City College
Jayanagar, Bengaluru - 560 070

Timings: 10 AM - 7 PM

Scan for location

Surprise Gifts Await!

For more details contact: Bengaluru: Sowjanya - 88844 32337 | Sebastian - 82969 60291

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Govt. to mark 3rd anniversary with convention in Tumakuru today

About 1.4 lakh people to receive various benefits under government schemes on the occasion

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid continued talk over the Congress leadership, the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah-led Congress government will celebrate the completion of three years on Tuesday with the 'Pragathiyatta Karnataka' (Karnataka towards development) convention at Tumakuru.

To mark the occasion, as many as 1.4 lakh beneficiaries will receive beneficiary certificates/government documents/title deeds, and various development works for Tumakuru will be launched at an estimated cost of ₹500 crore.

"The convention will witness the distribution of certificates/documents by the Revenue Department, and will have a celebration to mark the completion of three years. We gave a manifesto and promised people that it would be realised in five years. We will tell the people the achievements of the government," Home Minister G. Parameshwara told presspersons. Over the next two years, he said, the government will initiate work on the long-term promises made by the Congress.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. FILE PHOTO

He also denied allegations that he was using this platform as a show of strength on his home turf. "We will not say anything beyond the achievements of the government. We are not seeing it as a show of strength. We want to tell the people that we have walked the talk," Dr. Parameshwara said.

He refused to field questions on change of leadership and Cabinet reshuffle, stating that it was political and the party's internal matter. Regarding the participation of any Central leaders from the Congress in the event, Dr. Parameshwara said that since it was a government function, no one from the high command would participate.

The State government had earlier organised functions and reached out to beneficiaries to celebrate anniversaries in Haveri and Hospete.

According to a note from the Revenue Department, Tumakuru district, with 11 taluks and a population of 27 lakh, is the second-biggest district in the State. The event comes at a time when the Congress is internally besieged with the turf war over power between Mr. Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.

On Monday, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda and Dr. Parameshwara, who is also the in-charge Minister of Tumakuru district, inspected the arrangements for the convention, which is expected to draw a huge crowd.

Terming the convention as the Sadhaneya Samavesha (convention to mark achievements), Mr. Gowda said that documents pertaining to 13.33 lakh acres, which were in the name of the deceased across the State, have been registered in their family members' names over the last three years.

Mr. Gowda further added, "More than one lakh families will receive services/documents at Tumakuru. These include distribution of title deeds to about 20,000 families, distribution of khata documents to about 80,000 heirs of the deceased, and documents pertaining to podi durast to 7,000 farmers' families."

Birthday boy

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda who celebrated his 94th birthday in Bengaluru on Monday is seen blessing his son and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

'State govt. has no moral right to hold celebration'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ahead of the convention being organised by the Congress government to mark its third anniversary, the BJP on Monday maintained that the goverment did not have moral right to hold such anniversary celebrations at a time when the State was witnessing a sad trend of farmers' suicides.

Addressing a press conference in Bengaluru, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok squarely blamed the Congress government for the farm distress, resulting in suicides of farmers, by alleging that the anti-farmer policies of the government were responsible for it.

R. Ashok. FILE PHOTO

"While farmers' suicides across the country have decreased by 2.22%, in Karnataka they have increased by 22.61%. In 2023, there were 2,423 farmers' suicide cases; in 2024, this rose to 2,971. According to the NCRB report, Karnataka stands second in the country in farmers' suicides. This is the Congress government's 'Sixth Guarantee'," he said.

He maintained that going ahead with the anniversary celebrations in such a sad time would amount to indulging in politics over the graves of farmers.

He alleged that the government had failed to provide adequate funds to farmers' welfare in the State Budget despite making a pre-poll promise of ensuring their development.

Accusing the government of failure to respond to the problems of farmers, he alleged that the government's much publicised guarantee schemes had turned out to be "Suicide Guarantee", "No Crop Compensation Guarantee", "No Water Guarantee", and "No Three-Phase Power Guarantee" for farmers.

Accusing the government of being apathetic towards farmers' problems, Mr. Ashok alleged that the government had not bothered to help them though standing crops on thousands of acres were destroyed in natural calamities

Alleging that ₹12 crore had been demanded from the government for holding the third anniversary convention, he maintained that this would amount to misuse of funds as this was nothing but a Congress political convention.

"People's tax money is being looted in the name of such conventions. The real intention behind organising this event with ₹12 crore budget is to siphon off ₹8 crore," he alleged.

Advocates' association against move to establish High Court Circuit Bench in Mangaluru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Advocates' Association, Bengaluru (AAB), has written to Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice of the High Court of Karnataka, opposing the State government's proposed move to establish a Circuit Bench of the High Court in Mangaluru for coastal districts, while terming the move "premature" and lacking any empirical basis.

In its letter on Monday, AAB stated that reports in a section of the media indicate that the State government is considering allotment of land for setting up a Bench of the High Court in Mangaluru to cater to the coastal districts.

The letter has been signed by AAB president Vivek Subba Reddy, general secretary H.V. Praveen Gowda, vice-president Girish Kumar C.S., and treasurer Shwetha Ravishankar.

Objecting to the proposal, the association said that "any such move initiated without proper consultation with stakeholders and without conducting any empirical or statistical study regarding the actual necessity of a Bench would be wholly unwarranted".

The association stated that bar associations across Karnataka had expressed "serious reservations and objections" to any attempt at further splitting or subdividing the principal seat in Bengaluru, and existing Benches of the High Court in Dharwad and Kalaburagi.

"The AAB also records its strong and unequivocal opposition to the said proposal," the association added, while claiming that the move appeared to be "motivated to appease certain regional sentiments" than by any genuine judicial or administrative necessity.

"The coastal region comprises only three districts, and establishment of a separate Bench exclusively for such limited territorial jurisdiction would neither be justified nor economically prudent. No comprehensive study had been undertaken to assess the pendency of cases, accessibility concerns, judicial infrastructure requirements, or the broader administrative implications of such a decision," the letter further stated.

According to the association, "proliferation of multiple smaller Benches would gradually dilute the stature, unity and constitutional significance of the High Court as an institution". The association has warned that "fragmentation could adversely affect uniformity and consistency in judicial administration across the State.

The association urged the Chief Justice to reject any proposal forwarded by the State government in this regard and requested that no decision be taken without first consulting all affected stakeholders, including bar associations from Bengaluru, Madikeri, Hassan, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga, and Karwar.

Chief Minister, Deputy CM attend V.D. Satheesan's swearing-in

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar attended the swearing-in ceremony of senior Congress leader V.D. Satheesan in Kerala on Monday.

Several senior Congress leaders from different States were present at the event, which drew a large gathering of party workers and supporters.

Mr. Shivakumar received a warm response from the crowd, with sections of the audience raising slogans of "DK, DK".

Kerala Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and AICC General Secretary K.C. Venugopal in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday.

Party sources said the Karnataka leaders interacted with senior Kerala Congress functionaries on the sidelines of the event.

JPC consults Padma awardees from State on 'One Nation, One Election'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

All welcome the move citing stability, reduction in public expenditure, and more time for governance

The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) looking into 'One Nation, One Election' met 12 Padma awardees from Karnataka on Monday to elicit their opinions on holding simultaneous elections in India.

The JPC was in Bengaluru to hold a consultation with various stakeholders on the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, and The Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill on the issue of simultaneous elections in India.

While all welcomed the move citing stability, reduction in public expenditure, and more time for governance, two awardees also offered words of caution. "The concept has to be implemented carefully, protecting the democracy and rights of the States," said K.S. Jayalakshmi, editor of Sanskrit daily *Sudharma*. Prahlada R. Rao, former DRDO director, said the elections will be difficult to synchronise, but implementable with a proper strategy. Musician and Grammy Award winner Ricky Kej highlighted the impact on the environment amid political instability and insecurity over continuation in public representatives' terms, and welcomed the policy.

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No. CEE/Tr(Op)ZB/SEE(O)/AEE-3/F-306(2)/GBR/2026-27/1491-92 Date: 15.05.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

KPTCL invites bid against the **Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/PTK-20 (Call-3)** for the work of Erection of 3no's. of 11kV MCVCB switchgear feeder panels for bifurcation of 11kV feeders at **66/11kV Nallimaradahalli** S/s, Operation Division, Doddaballapura on Partial Turnkey Basis including supply of all matching materials/equipments (excluding supply of 11kV MCVCB feeder panel), erection (including civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing & commissioning.
The bids will be received through electronic tender mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the E-tendering process can be obtained by logging onto KPP Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **25.05.2026** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Ele.),
Transmission (Operation) Zone, KPTCL,
A.R. Circle, Bengaluru - 09

Vishnunadh's induction into Kerala Cabinet brings cheer to people of Tumari in Sagar taluk

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The oath-taking ceremony of Kerala's new Congress Cabinet, led by V.D. Satheesan, has given the people of Tumari, a small island surrounded by the Sharavati backwaters in Sagar taluk, a reason to cheer.

P.C. Vishnunadh, inducted into the Cabinet, is married to Ha.Ma. Kanaka, a Kannada poet and native of Haalkere village in Tumari Gram Panchayat. The two met at an event to mark the 75th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March in Gujarat in 2005 and married two years later.

Ms. Kanaka is also a theatre personality. She has been actively involved in organising the PAMPA literary festival in Kerala.

P.C. Vishnunadh with wife Ha.Ma. Kanaka, a native of Haalkere, near Tumari, in Sagar taluk, Shivamogga.

Mr. Vishnunadh, a four-time MLA, has represented Chenganur twice and has won from Kundara in Kollam district in the last two elections. He came to politics with no family background in the field, finding his footing during his college days. "Former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy spotted his potential and mentored him through his early political career," said Raghu Haalkere, the Minister's brother-in-law.

Mr. Vishnunadh visits Haalkere regularly with his wife and daughter Annapurneshwari. Mr. Raghu organises an annual three-day literary event at Tumari in memory of his late father Ha.Ma. Bhat, a socialist and literary figure of the region. Mr. Vishnunadh does not miss the programme.

Youth Cong. members clash at party office

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A meeting convened by the Karnataka Youth Congress at the KPCC office in Bengaluru on Monday to plan a protest against the NEET exam fiasco turned into a battle between two factions, with a heated altercation and jostling almost coming close to a fist fight.

It may be noted that the party is planning to stage the protest on Thursday.

A section of the Youth Congress – upset over the recent suspension of 17 party leaders and workers – were incensed at State Youth Congress president H.N. Manjunath Gowda, condemning his "dictatorial" attitude. Congress sources said the party leaders and workers were suspended since they had not attended a few meetings convened earlier. Among the suspended included State Youth Congress vice-president Deepika Reddy.

Sources said the issue came up when some of the suspended members sought a response from State Youth Congress in-charge Nigam Bhandary on the basis for their suspension. The group became furious when a person from Mr. Gowda's faction intervened, asking them what their *locus standi* was to ask such a question.

Meanwhile, a verbal altercation broke out between the two groups.

Ms. Reddy is learnt to have said that the action taken against her was a result of political vengeance and a conspiracy against women, not a disciplinary action.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Born : 15.11.1929 Died : 19.05.2021

N.C.SUNDARARAJAN
Chartered Accountant

"Those who touch our lives, stay in our Hearts Forever' "
"Yet another year has passed physically but your spirit still shines through our work. We walk the path of your vision and strive to make you proud."

Partners & Staff
N.C.Rajagopal & Co.,
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Athani - 591 304. Tq: Athani. Dist: Belgaum.

No. : E.E./K.N.N.L./R&R/P.B./TND/BLIS/FIC/2026-27/216
Date : 14-05-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-Procurement only)

Electronic Percentage Tender through KPP Platform KW-4 Basis in Two Cover System is invited by the **Executive Engineer KNNL R & R Division, Atahni** on behalf of the **Managing Director, Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited, 4th Floor, Coffee Board Building No. : 1, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bangalore - 01 for the Work of 1) KPP I. NO - 4425, 2) KPP I. NO - 4426, 3) KPP I. NO - 4427, 4) KPP I. NO - 4428, 5) KPP I. NO - 4429, 6) KPP I.NO - 546 Call-2**

1) The Blank Tender Documents can be Obtained and Uploaded through KPPP between : 18-05-2026 @ 10.30 a.m. to 25-05-2026 upto 4.00 p.m. 2) Last Date for Tender Queries : 22-05-2026 upto 4.00 p.m. 3) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held in the Office of the EE R&R Division, Athani : 20-05-2026 at 11.00 a.m. 4) Last Date for Submission : 25-05-2026 upto 4.00 p.m. 5) Opening of Technical Bid on : 26-05-2026 @ 4.30 p.m. 6) Opening of Financial Bid on : 29-05-2026 @ 11.00 a.m.

Stipulated Period Sl. No. 01 to 06 is 06 Months Including Mansoon, Amount Put to Tender (Excl. GST). for 1) Rs. 415.93, Lakhs, 2) Rs. 328.87 Lakhs, 3) 391.98 Lakhs, 4) Rs. 211.55 Lakhs, 5) 279.85 Lakhs, 6) Rs. 403.09 Lakhs & 9) Class of Contractor KPWD Class-II and above Registered Contractors.

Any information required in this regard can be had from the E-procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and Office of the **Executive Engineer, K.N.N.L., R&R Division, Athani** and this Office **Telephone No. : 08289 - 285031** during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
K.N.N.L., R&R Division, Athani.

DIPR/Belagavi/267/Manipal/2026-27

INBRIEF

DRI recovers two Indian Red Sand Boa snakes in Telangana

Officials of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Hyderabad zonal unit, seized two live Indian Red Sand Boa snakes and apprehended a person during an operation in Warangal in Telangana on Sunday. Officials said specific intelligence inputs indicated that a person was attempting to sell live snakes in the grey market. The DRI conducted an undercover decoy operation on May 17 and intercepted the suspect at the identified location.

Naidu hails TTD for near 90% forest cover in Tirumala hills

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Monday congratulated the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) on achieving 89.40% forest cover in Tirumala through sustained conservation measures aimed at protecting forest wealth and restoring native species in the Seshachalam Hills. He, in a message on 'X' appreciated the TTD's efforts, saying it would help preserve a greener and healthier Tirumala for future generations.

Three held in Telangana for killing two moneylenders

An investigation into the murders of two women moneylenders in Telangana's Vikarabad district on March 30 and May 4 has revealed that the accused couple had allegedly planned to kill several more lenders to wipe out debts of ₹10 lakh to ₹12 lakh, police said. The accused, Kareema, Rahman and Nayeem, were arrested by Tandur Rural police on Sunday. The murders came to light after technical surveillance traced the a victim's movements.

V.D. Satheesan sworn in as Chief Minister of Kerala

Governor Rajendra Arlekar administers oath to 20 Ministers at a ceremony in the State capital that was attended by Chief Ministers and Ministers of various States, and members of the UDF

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Congress leader V.D. Satheesan was sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Kerala along with 20 Ministers at a ceremony held at a packed Central Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on Monday. Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Satheesan and the Ministers-designate over a one-hour-long ceremony.

The Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) had scripted a landslide victory over the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in the April 9 elections by claiming 102 of the 140 seats in the Assembly.

Triumphant arrival: V. D. Satheesan and Ramesh Chennithala on stage for the swearing-in ceremony on Monday. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Mr. Satheesan, 61, who was the Leader of the Opposition during 2021-2026, was the first to be sworn in. Mr. Arlekar presented Mr. Satheesan with a bouquet as the stadium drowned in cheers from the crowd. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi greeted the new Chief Minister with a hug.

List of Ministers

Mr. Arlekar administered the oaths to other Ministers-designate and greeted all the members of the new Council of Ministers with bouquets.

In taking the oaths, Mr. Satheesan was followed by Ministers-designate P.K. Kunhalikutty, Ramesh Chennithala, Sunny Joseph, K. Muraleedharan, Mons Joseph, Shibu Baby John, Anoop Jacob, C.P. John, A.P. Anil Kumar, N. Samsudheen, P.C. Vishnunadh, Roji M. John, Bindu Krishna, M. Liju, K.M. Shaji, P.K. Basheer, V.E. Abdul Gafoor, T. Siddique, K.A. Thulasi and O.J. Janeesh. All of them took the oath in Malayalam, except K. Muraleedharan who took the oath in English.

Chief Ministers and Ministers of various States and a large number of UDF members were present at the venue to witness the ceremony.

UDF rolls out 2 guarantees on first day: free bus travel for women, ASHA hike

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The first Cabinet meeting of the United Democratic Front (UDF) government, which took charge on Monday, decided to implement two of the five 'Indira guarantees' that the front had promised during the election campaign.

At a press conference following the Cabinet meeting, Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan announced guarantees such as free bus travel for all women in buses belonging to the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) from June 15 and a dedicated department for senior citizens to ensure dignity, care, and focussed welfare for the elderly.

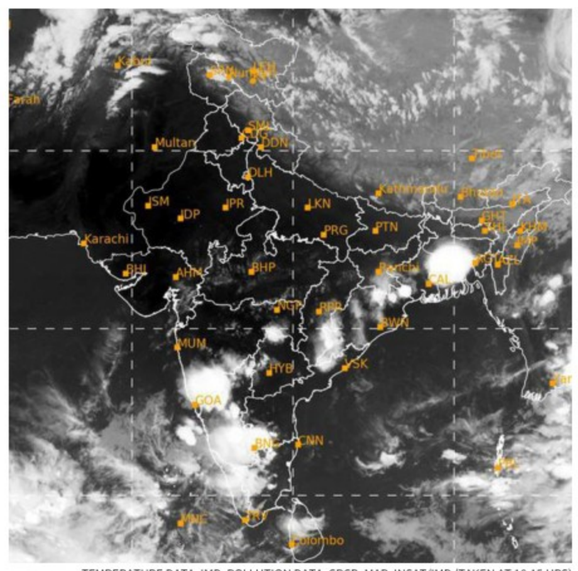
"I think Kerala will be the first State to have such a department. We will conduct studies on how Japan is implementing schemes for senior citizens, as it has a model worth emulating," Mr. Satheesan said.

The government has also decided to increase the honorarium of ASHA workers by ₹3,000, raising it to ₹12,000. "I had gone to the protest venue of ASHAs in front of the Secretariat and told them that we will implement their demands one by one from the first Cabinet meeting onwards. I am sticking to that word. A decision on ASHAs' retirement benefits will be taken within a month based on the reports regarding financial liabilities and fiscal impact that we have sought. The government will bring out a White Paper on State Finances," said Mr. Satheesan.

The honorarium for pre-primary teachers, *ayahs* and cooks has also been increased by ₹1,000.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe, Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Heat wave conditions likely at isolated places over Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Bihar, Telangana and Vidarbha

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	46	29.9	20.3	Kozhikode	101	30.8	24.7
Ahmedabad	—	43.7	29.5	Kurnool	10	41.5	27.9
Aizawl	7	28.6	19.7	Lucknow	—	43.2	28.6
Allahabad	—	46.8	28.6	Madurai	—	37.0	25.2
Bengaluru	1.4	34.0	22.2	Mangaluru	14	31.0	24.2
Bhopal	—	44.0	28.5	Mumbai	—	34.1	27.4
Bhubaneswar	—	39.0	28.6	Mysuru	—	32.0	22.8
Chandigarh	—	41.8	27.2	New Delhi	—	43.4	26.3
Chennai	—	37.3	28.4	Patna	—	37.6	28.1
Coimbatore	—	34.1	24.0	Port Blair	19	31.7	24.2
Dehradun	—	38.9	22.6	Puducherry	—	34.6	27.2
Gangtok	37	22.7	15.6	Pune	—	41.8	26.0
Goa	11	34.3	25.0	Raipur	—	41.3	29.1
Guwahati	2	30.5	24.2	Ranchi	—	36.2	25.0
Hubballi	—	33.0	24.0	Shillong	7	23.8	15.0
Hyderabad	—	39.9	28.8	Shimla	—	32.2	18.4
Imphal	2	29.1	20.4	Srinagar	—	31.5	13.6
Jaipur	—	43.6	30.4	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.0	25.9
Kochi	9	30.8	25.4	Tiruchi	0.5	37.3	25.6
Kohima	—	23.0	16.0	Vijayawada	—	39.2	28.0
Kolkata	—	38.4	29.0	Visakhapatnam	—	35.5	28.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.22	100	24	 52	...115	
Bengaluru	...9	..24	48	 70	87	
Chennai	.15	..10	20	 40	51	
Delhi	.46	110	47	... 141	...229	
Hyderabad	.14	..13	33	 64	91	
Kolkata	.11	..25	..7	 51	61	
Lucknow	...9	..40	45	... 195	...140	
Mumbai	...3	..10	52	 26	90	
Pune	..—	..69	81	 24	50	
Visakhapatnam	.12	..41	11	 35	98	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Charkhi Dadri, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 317 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 15

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

HC extends SIT probe by two weeks in Sabarimala gold theft case

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has granted two more weeks to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) that has been probing the alleged misappropriation of gold from the Sabarimala temple in Kerala, to complete the entire exercise.

This followed the submission of a detailed report regarding the matter by S. Sasidharan, the investigating officer of the SIT, on Monday. In the report, the SIT has said that one of the principal reasons for the delay in completing the investigation is the non-receipt of the detailed analysis report from the National Metallurgical Laboratory (CSIR NML), Jamshedpur, where approximately 36 samples have been forwarded for scientific examination.

Reason for delay

The tests being conducted include X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) for determining the surface elemental composition, Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP MS) for ultra trace impurity and elemental profiling, and Optical Emission Spectroscopy (OES) for analysing alloy composition and metallurgical uniformity. These are highly specialised tests which require time for completion.

The laboratory authorities informed the SIT that the final report is expected to be furnished within ten days. Only after receiving the report can the agency determine the extent of gold plating and quantity of goldthe SIT told the HC.

Museum moments

Timeless art: Students admiring the photo exhibition in Hyderabad, Telangana, on heritage structures spanning ancient temples, medieval forts, and Nizam-era palaces on the occasion of International Museum Day at the State Museum in the city on Monday. NAGARA GOPAL

DMK has risen like a phoenix after every defeat, says Stalin

The Hindu Bureau
THANJAVUR

The DMK has risen like a phoenix after every defeat, party president M.K. Stalin said on Monday.

Speaking at the wedding of a Tiruvarur district office-bearer's family member in Thanjavur, the former Chief Minister said, "I think some people (at the wedding) are overwhelmed with woe (due to the DMK's electoral defeat). There is no need to worry."

The party had tasted both victory and defeat over the years, he added.

While congratulating the new government, Mr. Stalin urged it to continue the welfare schemes implemented by his government. "You have seen how the new government has agreed to the request," he said.

M.K. Stalin

Speaking at the ceremony, DMK youth wing secretary and Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin said the current government led by Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam would "be exposed" soon.

"In just the past 10 days, the people, including the youth and women, who voted for the TVK, have seen the real face of the current regime. As the days pass by, more people will understand the truth," Mr. Udhayanidhi added.

Stating that the DMK had lost only in "electoral politics", Mr. Udhayanidhi added that it had never been defeated in "principles-based politics".

Claiming that the DMK was not only a political party but also a social movement, Mr. Udhayanidhi said electoral defeats may affect other parties, but not the DMK. The party would continue to fulfil its social obligations under the guidance of Mr. Stalin, he added.

Stating that the DMK would protect the State's rights, he added that the people of Tamil Nadu would come out of their TVK "attraction" and turn towards the DMK.

Anbalagan takes charge as Pro-tem Speaker of Puducherry Assembly

The Hindu Bureau
PUDUCHERRY

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) legislator A. Anbalagan was on Monday sworn in Pro-tem Speaker of Puducherry Legislative Assembly.

The five-time legislator was administered the oath by Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan at a ceremony held at the Darbar Hall of Lok Niwas.

Chief Minister N. Rangasamy, Ministers A. Namassivayam, Malladi Krishna Rao, newly elected legislators belonging to the All India N. R. Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, Latchiya Jananayaga Katchi, and Independents attended the ceremony.

In the 2026 polls, Mr. Anbalagan won from the Ouppalam Assembly constituency defeating DMK's Annibal Kennedy by a margin of over 3,000 votes. He had earlier represented the constituency in 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016.

Later, accompanied by the Chief Minister, Ministers and legislators, including those belonging to DMK, Mr. Anbalagan assumed charge as the Pro-tem Speaker.

He told media that the Assembly would be convened on Wednesday for the oath taking of MLAs-elect. The Pro-tem Speaker would administer the oath to all the legislators.

Mr. Anbalagan said arrangements would be made for live streaming of the oath taking of the legislators.

Minister takes charge

The Legislature Party Leader of BJP A. Namassivayam, representing Mannadipet constituency, who was sworn in as Minister along with Chief Minister on May 13, assumed office on Monday.

Though the portfolios are yet to be allocated, Mr. Namassivayam visited the office room that was allocated during the previous NDA government while handling Home, Education, Electricity, and Industries portfolio.

Health gains reversed by geopolitical challenges: Soumya Swaminathan

Nagesh Prabhu
SINGAPORE

Soumya Swaminathan, chairperson of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, said on Monday that gains in global health achieved over recent decades are becoming increasingly fragile, while progress in maternal and child health is being reversed owing to geopolitical challenges and declining development funding.

'Rise in violence'

Delivering the keynote address at the inauguration of the sixth annual Philanthropy Asia Summit (PAS) in Singapore, she said, "Some of the gains we have made in maternal and child health are getting reversed because of geopolitics and loss of development funding in many countries."

Soumya Swaminathan

"Gender-based violence and domestic violence increase significantly with climate change, particularly during prolonged periods of heat and drought. People have also reported lower incomes during summer," she said.

Health and economy

Dr. Swaminathan said that many countries tend to focus on hospitals and primary healthcare centres when thinking about health systems, while overlooking the broader determinants of health, including social, environmental, and economic factors.

Highlighting the impact of climate change on public health, Dr. Swaminathan said, "I truly believe that climate change and all the threats we face today are not only about our health, but also about our survival."

Referring to India's recent heat conditions, "So, I think the future of cities and how we become climate-resilient is something that we really need to think about," she said.

Pointing to the environmental risks affecting health and the economy, she said air pollution and natural disasters are closely linked to climate change.

"The health outcomes are shaped by multiple interconnected pathways – mainly the air, food systems, ecosystems and, of course, climate," she said.

(The writer is in Singapore at the invitation of Philanthropy Asia Alliance)

Unlearnt lessons

India's inadequate strategic petroleum and gas reserves stand exposed

Last week, the Centre hiked retail petroleum product prices after a gap of four years. This was expected, since the government had been warning about high crude prices, and how public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) had been bleeding heavily due to under-recoveries. It was also expected that this would happen after the results of the five Assembly elections. But the Prime Minister's appeal for austerity due to the drain on foreign exchange, the sharp depreciation of the rupee in recent months and the April's inflation prints point to a much deeper problem that India could have addressed decades earlier – the country's inadequate strategic petroleum and gas reserves. India did build out a strategic petroleum reserve (SPR) of about 36.7 million-39 million barrels, a programme conceived following the post-1991 vulnerability and formalised in the early 2000s. But today, this covers about seven days of consumption demand at 5.5 million barrels per day (mbpd). Combined with inventories of OMCs and import cover, this amounts to more than 70 days of stock. But over the years, India has emerged as the world's third-largest automobile market after the U.S. and China, and a comparison with those nations reveals the scale of India's vulnerability.

While the U.S. built its SPRs in the aftermath of the 1973 oil shock – which, at 714 million barrels, is 18 times larger than India's – China's roughly 900 million barrels is even larger. The U.S. has about 400 million barrels currently in its reserve system, providing it with roughly 20 days of consumption. The country has emerged as the world's largest oil producer in the past 10 years with an output of about 13 mbpd and a commercial system wide inventory, pushing it above the 90 day-mark recommended by the International Energy Agency for reserves. The same applies to China, which is comparable with India as a more oil import-dependent nation. These numbers become even starker when compared with reserves for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG), where India is most exposed. India has about 1.4 lakh tonnes of LPG storage, while its daily consumption is about 80,000 tonnes – more than half its reserve capacity. As for LNG, India largely relies on stocks at regasification facilities of Petronet LNG and BPCL, without any underground storage for a fuel vital to produce fertilizers. Both the U.S. and China have heavily invested in underground LNG storage. The EU was quick to adapt following the Russia-Ukraine war as it drew down its dependence on Russian gas. These reserves have enabled advanced economies to hedge against supply disruptions by relying on long-term contracts at times of supply disruptions, cushioning them from spot market spikes. As for China, its defiance of American sanctions against Russian oil has paid off handsomely. India would have benefited too, had it maintained greater strategic autonomy.

Waiting for the storm

Despite the predictability of weather events, India remains vulnerable

Late last week, a pacy pre-monsoon weather system barrelled into Uttar Pradesh, bringing a compound of thunderstorms, dust storms, lightning, heavy rain, and thundersqualls to multiple districts at once. By May 14, the toll was 111 deaths and 72 injuries across 26 districts, rendering the storms among the deadliest weather-related disasters in Uttar Pradesh in recent times. The State has experienced similar weather events in May-June since 2018, if not before. The distinction this year seems to have been the intensity, with winds capable of uprooting trees. The storm appears to have been driven by a pre-monsoon convective system, with a fresh western disturbance over the northwest further destabilising conditions. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had issued thunderstorm and lightning alerts before the event and the Uttar Pradesh government reportedly issued more than 34 crore red and orange alert messages via the SACHET portal. However, it is not clear whether these warnings were sufficiently geographically precise or reached their intended beneficiaries in time – and in fact if they simply warned of impending adverse weather or carried instructions for people to act on.

Indeed, advance preparation is pertinent for two reasons. The State is sometimes in a convergence zone as the hot, dry, 'loo' winds from the Thar move east over the plains while moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal push in from the southeast. Second, over the undulating Vindhya hills in Mirzapur and Sonbhadra, the convergent air masses may lift rapidly, producing thunderstorms over specific parts of the State. Effectively, while no authority could have predicted the storms' local intensity, the underlying risk was hardly unforeseeable. Their recurrence at this time of the year and place should raise sharp questions about why so many deaths still occurred. Part of the answer is surely the proximate causes of death and damage, including housing and public infrastructure. Uttar Pradesh has a large number of structurally vulnerable rural and peri-urban households. If a storm strikes at dusk or later, people are often indoors or resting under fragile roofs. In addition, people are also vulnerable to improperly placed or poorly installed hoardings, electrical wiring, and public signage. The State was aware of the kinds of damage such storms could cause as it announced separate relief packages depending on the type of farming, crop, and loss. The underlying risk was foreseeable, yet the vulnerability was high.

Gender, caregiving, the law in Indian research funding

Nabeela Siddiqui

Assistant Professor, Vinayaka Mission's Law School, Vinayaka Mission's Research Foundation (Deemed University), Chennai

India's scientific ambitions are increasingly visible in space missions, pharmaceutical research, and peer-reviewed scholarship. Yet, its institutional culture that sustains this continues to marginalise many researchers. Women in academia, especially in mid-career stages, face a convergence of professional and domestic responsibilities that their male peers rarely experience to the same extent. Age relaxation provisions in research grants were introduced to address this gap, but as these policies evolve, they require closer scrutiny to improve their effectiveness rather than weaken them.

The legal foundation for gender-sensitive research policy in India is not merely permissive; it is, in important respects, directive. Article 15(3) of the Constitution allows the state to make special provisions for women and children, and this has long been read as enabling affirmative measures in employment and public opportunity. Article 16 reinforces equality of opportunity without precluding measures that correct historical disadvantage and read alongside the Directive Principles which speak of equal right to an adequate means of livelihood. There is a coherent constitutional argument that funding agencies have not just the authority but also a degree of responsibility to ensure women researchers are not structurally penalised for caregiving.

Article 51A(e), the fundamental duty to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women, adds another dimension. A policy environment that routinely produces grant cohorts with negligible female representation is not a neutral outcome – it reflects accumulated disadvantages that the constitutional framework obliges institutions to address.

The legislative gap at heart of the problem

The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 remains the most substantive legal protection available to women. The 2017 amendment extended paid maternity leave to 26 weeks for women with fewer than two surviving children and introduced provisions for crèche facilities in larger establishments. For women in academic research, this matters – but imperfectly. Many researchers at the postdoctoral or early career stage are employed on fellowships, project positions, or contractual appointments that fall outside the clear ambit of the Act.

Equally overlooked in current frameworks is the return to research after childbirth. Women returning from maternity leave often face disrupted laboratory work, changed collaborations, and misaligned grant timelines, with little formal support for reintegration or reduced workload. The expectation of immediate full productivity after childbirth is unrealistic and requires clear policy intervention rather than informal goodwill from supervisors.

The structural gender gaps in India's research ecosystem must be addressed

India has no central legislation on paternity leave. Central government employees receive 15 days under the Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972, but this is administrative rather than statutory, and no comparable entitlement exists for researchers funded through extramural grants. This legislative asymmetry – generous maternity protection, minimal paternity provision – is not incidental. It shapes how institutions and funding agencies think about caregiving, and it partly explains why age relaxation policies have been designed exclusively around women rather than around the act of caregiving itself.

The case for women-specific support in research funding is supported by persistent data, not assumption. The All India Survey on Higher Education (2021-22) shows that the higher education system had nearly 16 lakh faculty in 2021-22 with 57% male and 43% female. Women remain underrepresented in faculty positions across central universities and especially in science and technology institutions. The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) has also reported consistently lower application and success rates among women researchers.

The pattern is clear. Women who complete doctoral degrees in their mid-to-late twenties enter postdoctoral work at the same time as peak domestic responsibilities. Balancing grant cycles, publication pressure, travel, and childcare is not shared equally in academic households. Studies on dual-career faculty, including at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, show that women typically bear a greater share of domestic work regardless of professional status. The consequences are measurable: delayed publications, gaps in grant records, and reduced international visibility. Age relaxation, in this context, is a partial remedy for a documented structural disadvantage.

What the courts have suggested

The Supreme Court of India's reasoning in *Vijay Lakshmi vs Punjab University And Others* (2003) is relevant here. Addressing preferential provisions for women in service matters, the Court drew a clear distinction between formal equality and substantive equality, which accounts for unequal outcomes.

It held that measures favouring women are constitutionally valid when they address demonstrated disadvantages. This logic applies to research grants as well: extending eligibility windows for women is not preferential treatment, but a corrective to structural disadvantage.

None of this implies that current policy is adequate. Age relaxation policies such as those under SERB address eligibility at the application stage but not the everyday conditions of research. A five-year extension to the upper age limit may allow women to apply for grants they would otherwise miss, but it does not provide childcare support during proposal writing, institutional support during maternity leave, or re-entry funding after career breaks.

There is also the question of who the policy excludes. A single father or a man caring for an ailing parent may also face significant career disruption, but the policy does not recognise him. This is not an argument to weaken protections for women, as evidence shows that caregiving burdens are not equal in Indian academia. Rather, it calls for an additional layer of support for documented caregiving responsibilities, while retaining and strengthening women-specific provisions that address the more widespread disadvantage.

What more considered policy would be

The National Education Policy 2020 gestures toward institutional flexibility and faculty wellbeing, but these commitments have not yet translated into binding research funding policy. That gap is overdue to be addressed. Funding agencies should consider no-cost grant extensions for documented caregiving periods, re-entry fellowships for women returning to research, and flexible milestone reporting for researchers with caregiving responsibilities. Several European research councils have implemented similar measures, showing that gender-neutral caregiving support, alongside gender-specific provisions, can improve equity without appearing arbitrary.

Gender-based age relaxation in Indian research grants is constitutionally grounded and empirically justified. The disadvantage it addresses is real, documented, and persistent. Removing it in the name of gender neutrality would be a policy error not supported by evidence. What is needed instead is a layered approach that retains support for women researchers while adding provisions for other caregivers. India's research institutions owe their women scholars not just formal access to grants but the structural conditions in which a sustained research career is genuinely possible. Age relaxation is a beginning. It should not be mistaken for an ending

Strategic spark in India-South Korea defence ties

Lakhvinder Singh

Director of Peace and Security Studies at the Asia Institute in Seoul, South Korea

The visit of the Indian Defence Minister to Seoul (May 19-21), following the South Korean President's visit to India (April 19-21, 2026), underscores the growing momentum and strategic significance of the India-South Korea partnership in recent years.

What began as limited defence engagement has evolved into a multidimensional partnership in defence manufacturing, technology transfer, and military modernisation. The K9 Vajra-T programme, developed under the 'Make in India' initiative, has become the flagship project of India-South Korea defence cooperation, paving the way for several other successful initiatives.

Project areas

Today, bilateral defence cooperation is expanding rapidly, with several new projects under consideration. Submarine collaboration has emerged as a key focus area, driven by South Korea's expertise in conventional submarines, lithium-ion battery systems, and air-independent propulsion technologies through companies such as Hanwha Ocean. South Korea's advancing aerospace sector, including the KF-21 fighter programme and the FA-50 light combat aircraft, has opened new avenues for collaboration in fighter technologies, engines, avionics, missile integration, and maintenance systems.

As one of the world's leading shipbuilding powers, South Korea can significantly contribute to India's growing maritime ambitions in the Indo-Pacific through cooperation in destroyers, logistics vessels, submarine support systems, smart shipyards, and naval propulsion technologies.

Discussions are also progressing in areas such as light tanks, utility helicopters, future ready combat vehicles, military lithium batteries, and defence electronics. Indian and Korean defence firms are pursuing joint ventures and industrial partnerships across multiple sectors.

Importantly, the partnership is evolving beyond conventional weapons systems toward innovation-driven cooperation. Both countries are promoting defence innovation ecosystems linking startups, universities, research institutions, incubators, and investors. The proposed Korea-India Defence Accelerator (KIND-X) reflects this future-oriented approach.

Expanding defence cooperation will reflect shared regional security priorities

At the strategic level, military exchanges, naval exercises, coast guard cooperation, and defence dialogues are strengthening interoperability and mutual trust. For India, South Korea offers advanced technology and manufacturing expertise, while India provides a large market, strategic geography, and long-term industrial opportunities. Together, the two countries have the potential to build one of Asia's most significant defence partnerships.

Cooperation in the defence industrial sector represents a significant indicator of the growing maturity and strategic depth of bilateral relations. However, it would be a serious strategic miscalculation for both countries to confine this partnership solely to these domains.

An evolving Indo-Pacific environment

The rapidly evolving Indo-Pacific geopolitical environment requires India and South Korea to expand their defence cooperation beyond industrial ties toward a broader strategic partnership focused on regional stability and shared security goals.

The next phase of defence engagement should, therefore, focus on formulating an institutionalised and forward-looking defence road map encompassing emerging security threats across the wider Indo-Pacific region. Such a framework must move beyond the current primarily defence-industrial focus of cooperation and evolve into a multidimensional partnership grounded in shared security concerns, geopolitical stability, and regional resilience.

The geopolitical landscape around the Korean Peninsula is changing rapidly. North Korea's growing missile and nuclear capabilities continue to pose a serious threat to South Korea, while expanding Russia-North Korea military cooperation is reshaping Northeast Asia's security architecture.

China's growing naval assertiveness around the Korean Peninsula has created new strategic concerns for South Korea. Beijing's expanding influence and military presence in the South China Sea also carry major implications for South Korea, as a significant share of its energy imports and maritime trade passes through these waters.

South Korea is also facing serious structural challenges. Its declining demographic profile and shrinking pool of military recruits are weakening the long-term sustainability of its conventional defence posture. Combined with a rapidly changing security environment, these internal vulnerabilities create a complex strategic situation requiring urgent and sustained policy attention from countries seeking long-term strategic cooperation with Seoul.

Need for a strategic convergence

In this context, it is essential for India's strategic thinkers and defence planners to pay closer attention to changing geopolitical realities in South Korea. Ignoring these developments could undermine both South Korea's security and India's broader Indo-Pacific interests.

If India seeks to substantially expand its defence-industrial cooperation with South Korea, it must recognise that such cooperation depends on South Korea's security, stability, and strategic resilience. Strengthening South Korea's ability to address its security challenges should be central to this partnership.

The Indian Defence Minister's visit to Seoul should lead to the beginning of a new phase in India-South Korea defence cooperation – one that moves beyond defence-industrial ties toward a broader partnership grounded in shared security interests and Indo-Pacific stability.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beyond numbers

Raising the strength of Supreme Court judges from 33 to 37 is too modest to substantially clear the backlog of cases (Front page, May 18). Even if it is increased to 100, nothing will improve. The need of the hour is fixed timelines, better case filtering, fewer unnecessary adjournments, greater use of technology, and judicial reforms rather than just increasing the number of judges. People want not just justice, but quick justice.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao,
Hyderabad

The decision may offer temporary administrative relief, but it is unlikely to cure the deeper institutional malaise. Pendency is not merely a problem of numbers; it is a problem of judicial architecture. Former judges and legal scholars have repeatedly pointed to procedural delays, indiscriminate admission of appeals, prolonged constitutional hearings, and the Court's transformation into a routine court of error rather than a constitutional court. Even with four additional judges, fresh filings may continue to outpace disposals. What India perhaps needs is structural reform — regional benches, stricter filtering of Special Leave Petitions, greater use of technology, and stronger High Courts. Without rethinking the court's role and functioning, expansion alone risks becoming an endless arithmetic exercise.

Gopalaswamy J.,
Chennai

Poor maintenance

The recent fire incident on the Delhi-Thiruvananthapuram Rajdhani Express has once again raised concerns about passenger safety and the condition of coaches used on this prestigious train. Introduced in 1969, the Rajdhani Express was one of Indian Railways' premier long-distance services. However, it is disappointing that many coaches now appear old and poorly maintained. I travelled in the first air-conditioned coach of this train a couple of years ago and experienced water seepage in the washroom and wash areas, clearly reflecting ageing infrastructure and inadequate upkeep. While the central government and Indian Railways continue to introduce new trains under different categories, insufficient attention appears to be given to replacing ageing coaches in flagship services such as the Rajdhani. Passenger safety, comfort, and maintenance standards should never be compromised on trains carrying thousands of passengers over long distances.

S. Subhash,
Kayamkulam, Kerala

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Improving efficiency of fertilizer use in India

Nandula Raghuram

Professor and Founder, Centre for Sustainable Nitrogen and Nutrient Management, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi, President, Sustainable India Trust and Society for Conservation of Nature, New Delhi, and Emeritus Chair, International Nitrogen Initiative. Views expressed are personal

The ongoing war in West Asia and the rising costs of fuel and fertilizers give India an opportunity to enhance fertilizer use efficiency and moderate demand. India produces 80% of its urea requirement domestically and imports the rest while also boosting domestic production capacities to become fully self-reliant. But India's urea industry relies too heavily on imported fuel. While green ammonia produced from the electrolysis of water using solar energy is an option, it is not sustainable in water-stressed areas. The situation is worse for phosphatic fertilizers, as India lacks mineral rock phosphate and therefore has to import such fertilizers almost entirely.

Together, both the nitrogen (mostly urea) and phosphorus components of fertilizers define India's food security. While the government has been enhancing subsidies to maintain fertilizer prices for farmers, over two-thirds of the ₹2 lakh crore spent on annual subsidies is not harvested as food, and is lost to pollution.

The fertilizer trap

Inefficient, excessive or unbalanced use of fertilizer nutrients not only wastes money but also damages the soil, water, air, human health, biodiversity, and causes climate change and global warming. The more fertilizers we use, the more they deplete the soil's organic matter and its holding capacity for water and nutrients, threatening crop yields and pushing farmers to add more fertilizers. This 'fertilizer trap' explains why India's national demand for fertilizers never saturates, even as supply has increased over the decades.

Therefore, it is high time to move beyond supply side management and boost fertilizer use efficiency to moderate demand. Efficiency means producing more crop per kg of fertilizer used, or maintaining yields while reducing fertilizer input. The government's 'nutrient-based subsidy' did not improve efficiencies or reduce demand as urea was not included in the scheme. While neem-coated urea was meant to improve nitrogen-use efficiency, it could not stop the loss of most of the urea as ammonia to air pollution.

Similarly, most of the phosphatic fertilizers are also lost to water pollution.

Lack of coordination

While pulses, other leguminous cover crops, manures, composts and biochar could reduce fertilizers to a large extent, they are no longer the mainstay of our farming systems. Last month, the Union government directed the State governments to promote green manure but did not emphasise on fertilizer savings.

In November 2017, the Prime Minister had, in his *Man ki Baat* address to the nation, called for halving fertilizer usage within five years. However, fertilizer consumption has only increased due to the lack of inter-ministerial and interdepartmental coordination to address farming systems in an integrated manner. For example, though the government announces Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for over 20 crops, actual government procurement is limited to rice, wheat and sugarcane, which is why farmers prefer to grow only these three crops. These crops consume over two-thirds of all the urea in India. This destroys traditional crop rotations involving pulses/legumes and pushes farmers into the fertilizer trap.

Pulse-cereal rotations sustained agriculture for thousands of years before fertilizers were invented, as most pulses leave behind some of the fixed nitrogen in the soil for the next crop. India must incentivise pulses/legume-based crop rotations or multicropping, as legumes fix atmospheric nitrogen, and need no urea or only 10% of the urea used for cereals. They are also ideal for rain-fed areas facing deficit monsoons (as predicted this year).

The Dalhan Aatmanirbharta Mission launched in October 2025 promised 100% procurement of Tur, Urad, and Masoor at MSP for four years. Under it, ₹11,440 crore was allocated to scale up production to 350 lakh tonnes per year in five years by expanding the area under cultivation. But according to the April 2026 data released by the government, the area for sowing pulses grew only 1.26% over last year. This is negligible compared to the 10% fall in area between 2021-22 to 2024-25. This calls for better implementation, as recommended by the Supreme Court in March.

Enhancing efficiency

India must also triple the recycling of manure, compost and biochar (residue from biogas plants) to replace fertilizers and boost soil health. Fertilizer recommendations need to be revised in order to ensure that organics form the basal dose and fertilizers are used only as a top-up to meet any shortfall, after exhausting all locally available organic sources. Coordinated crop trials across India showed that upto half of the recommended doses of fertilizers can be replaced with manure, biochar or compost with no loss of crop yield.

There should also be investment when it comes to alternatives for efficient nitrogen/phosphorus sources for crop improvement. The adoption of an improved but existing variety is what the farmer needs – not fancy capital-intensive technologies or drones. India's own research shows that the rice germplasm alone has the potential to double nitrogen use efficiency, in terms of grain yield per unit urea supplied. To ensure the inter-sectoral coordination required to implement the above, the Union government should revive the Interministerial National Nitrogen Steering Committee. Its tenure expired before any of its recommendations were acted upon.

The more fertilizers we use, the more they deplete the soil's organic matter and its holding capacity for water and nutrients, threatening crop yields and pushing farmers to add more fertilizers

A new political trajectory in Bihar

All is not well among the NDA allies in the State

STATE OF PLAY

Amarnath Tewary

A month into the new regime in Bihar, Bharatiya Janata Party leader and new Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary has emerged as the unquestionable leader of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the State, effectively sidelining its coalition partner, the Janata Dal (United) or JD(U) from its role as the *Bada Bhai* (elder brother) in the alliance. After over two decades of rule in Bihar, the JD (U), led by party leader Nitish Kumar, gave the mantle over to its coalition partner, the BJP, on April 15.

Mr. Choudhary, BJP's MLA from the Tarapur constituency, has been taking governance forward in the State, in his new avatar, in line with Mr. Kumar's policies. At least, that's what he aims to convey by announcing the same every now and then, and by consistently meeting Mr. Kumar before taking any major decision regarding governance.

Underneath the surface

However, while everything looks hunky-dory on the outside, one can find several grey lines if one looks beneath the political surface of the ruling NDA in Bihar.

The first and foremost was the smooth evacuation of the former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar from the sprawling 1, Anne Marg residence which had been his permanent address for about two decades. Mr. Kumar shifted to a bungalow in 7, circular road in the neighbourhood of his political arch-rival, Lalu Prasad Yadav, who also resides on the circular road. Mr. Choudhary quietly became the new occupant of the residence, and it was unobtrusively renamed as the Lok Sewak Awas.

Then came the bulldozer action against encroachers across the State, which many have now come to identify as a classic BJP tactic, originating from the neighbouring State of Uttar Pradesh ruled by BJP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Bulldozers were seen demolishing houses as part of anti-encroachment drives in cities such as Patna, Chhapra, Darbhanga, Sasaram etc.

And finally, Mr. Choudhary, like Nitish Kumar, had declared that he would not compromise on three Cs: crime, corruption and communalism. But, criminals are frequently being 'encountered' in the State, wherein suspected criminals are shot in the leg during alleged armed encounters. This is again similar to Uttar Pradesh's "Operation Langda". JD (U) leaders have just made statements to the effect that crime would not be tolerated in the State "at any cost".

Political analysts say that whatever action the new Chief Minister has been taking in his over one-month rule in Bihar is very much in line with what the BJP does in other States. "The BJP is known to quietly pursue its own agenda wherever it comes to power and in Bihar too they would do the same, Nitish Kumar or no Nitish Kumar. There should not be any ambiguity on this", says political analyst Nawal Kishore Choudhary.

Some economists though, do not feel very enthusiastic about the "projected growth" of the State, stating that as far as the State's economy was concerned, Bihar even today, stands where it was in 2004-05.

Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) leader Dipankar Bhattacharya, at the party's 12th meeting at Ara (Bhojpur), appealed to the people to protest against the government's "bulldozer politics and anti-people policies".

Emerging cracks

On May 17, senior JD (U) leader and Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh, asserted that the current Chief Minister had stated again and again that he would follow the path of development that Nitish Kumar had paved.

Ever since the new regime came to power in the State, Mr. Singh, a close confidante of Nitish Kumar is said to have gone soft towards the BJP along with the JD (U) working president Sanjay Kumar Jha.

On the same day, however, a former close aide of Nitish Kumar and strongman of the Kosi area of the State, Anand Mohan Singh, stated that all was not well with the alliance, and alleged that the JD (U) has become a party of "moneybaggers".

While JD (U) leaders have condemned such comments, party insiders say that after a month of governance under Mr. Choudhary, cracks between the ruling NDA allies in Bihar are visibly widening. "Let's see for how long things will be smooth, as we all know that the BJP eventually gobbles up it's allies wherever it comes to power", said one leader, preferring anonymity.

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Minimum temperatures are rising faster than maximum

The IMD's data for April found that maximum temperatures were near normal while minimum temperatures averaged 0.5 degrees Celsius above normal

DATA POINT

Areena Arora

Several parts of the country experienced many days of maximum heat, breaching 40 degrees Celsius last month. While this in itself is enough to make one sweat, literally and figuratively, a deeper look at last month's weather pattern tells an interesting story – while maximum temperatures are getting warmer across the country, minimum temperatures are heating up relatively faster in many places. Across large parts of central and western India, the daily maximum temperatures were close to or even below the normal expected temperatures of those areas.

The "normal" here refers to IMD's long-term baseline, which is the average April temperatures recorded at each station between 1991 and 2020. This 30-year reference period is the standard currently used by both the IMD and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). So, when a station shows below-normal temperatures, it means April 2026 was cooler than that location's April average, even if absolute temperatures were still high.

The IMD's Monthly Climate Summary for April 2026 found that across the country, maximum temperatures were near normal – just 0.11 degrees Celsius above the long-period average – while minimum temperatures averaged 0.5 degrees Celsius above normal. In other words, maximums barely deviated from what April typically experiences, while minimums were warmer than expected.

The minimum temperature at Delhi's Safdarjung station averaged 2.2 degrees Celsius above its normal while maximum temperatures averaged 0.3 degrees Celsius under the average. While the beginning of the month was relatively cooler, in the second half, Delhi's minimum temperature was more than 1.5 degrees Celsius higher than expected, leaving the city little time to recover from the heat. Punjab told the same story as Delhi but even more starkly. April maximums averaged a degree below the expected value of 34.8 degrees Celsius, while minimums were 2.4 degrees Celsius hotter than the State's average of 18 degrees Celsius.

Several Maharashtra stations also recorded higher minimum temperatures throughout April. Nagpur's minimum temperatures were 3.6 degrees Celsius above the average of 23.9 degrees Celsius while its maximums at an average of 40.1, were just slightly above the normal of 40.6 degrees Celsius.

Maps 1 and **2** show how the variation in maximum temperatures was lower than the variation in minimum temperatures in April. Of the 442 stations for which data was available, Chaparmukh in Assam and Phulbani in Odisha deviated the most from their normal minimum temperatures, running 5.5 degrees Celsius and 5.1 degrees Celsius above their April baselines of 14.9 degrees Celsius and 19.6 degrees Celsius respectively.

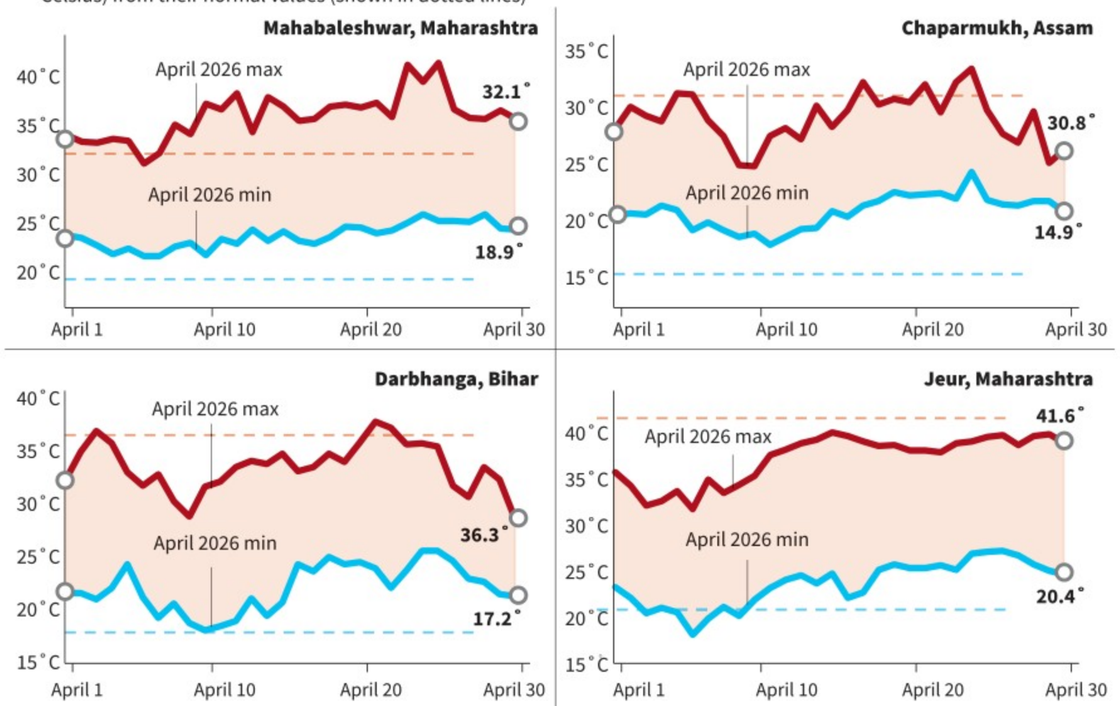
Chart 1 shows four stations which had among the highest deviation in maximum and minimum temperatures from their normal values. A cooler night gives the body time to recover from the day's heat. When that window closes, heat stress compounds across the day. The same logic applies to crops too. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization and WMO warned in an April report that high night-time temperatures force plants to keep burning the energy they built through photosynthesis in the day. This could cause stunted growth in plants.

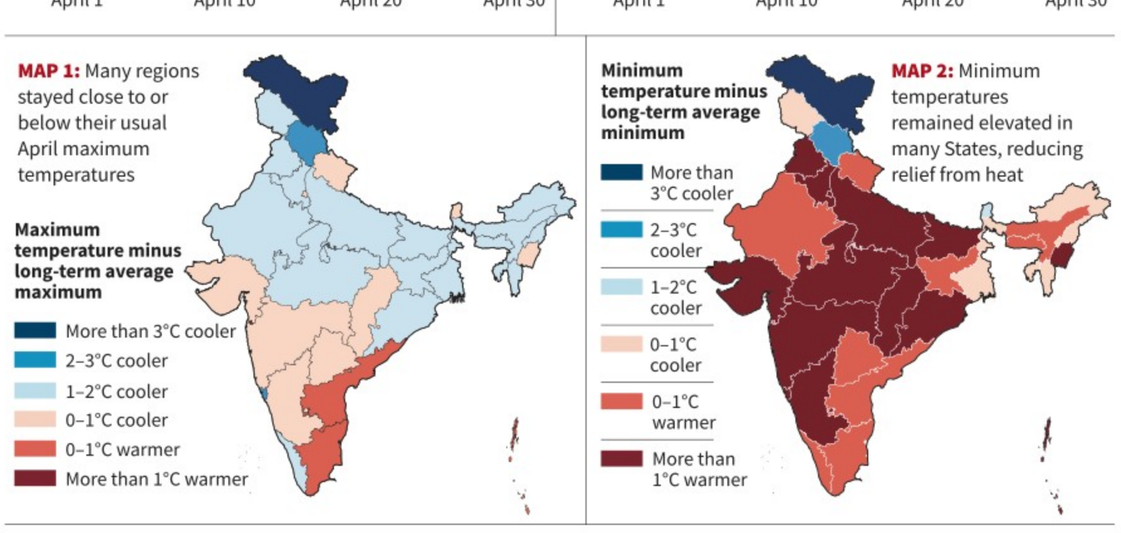
Tehri in Uttarakhand and Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu departed the most from their expected maximums. Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Telangana were the States with the most number of days where the maximum temperature crossed 40 degrees Celsius.

No relief?

The data for the charts were sourced from the India Meteorological Department. When a station shows below-normal temperatures, it means April 2026 was cooler than that location's long-term April average, even if absolute temperatures were still high

CHART 1: Four stations which had among the highest deviation in maximum and minimum temperatures (in degrees Celsius) from their normal values (shown in dotted lines)





FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 19, 1976

Plans to make Mughal Inns tourist havens

Chandigarh, May 18: Mughal period sarais (wayside inns) on the Jarnaili Road linking Delhi with Lahore and Peshawar are to be restored to their old glory.

These sarais, now derelict, used to provide royal comforts to their guests – Mughal Emperors and aristocrats.

Miss Ravneet Kaur, Director of the Punjab Government's Department of Tourism and Archaeology, told Samachar that the Government planned to turn these sarais into tourist havens.

The first such inn to be taken up for development is Aam-khas Bagh at Sirhind, where old channels, fountains and tanks are being restored. The renovation of Aam-khas Bagh is expected to be completed in about five years. The 'Sarad Khana' and the 'Hamam' (bath house) are at present being prepared.

Two reservoirs for hot and cold water have been discovered at the 'Hamam', which has attached dressing chambers. The structures will be restored to their original forms after a detailed study of similar structures at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri.

Miss Kaur said that restoration would also be undertaken shortly at the Shambhu, Dorahan and Amanat Khan inns on the same road.

She said the Tourist Department would shortly take over the fort (Quila Androon) at Patiala, which is embellished with wall paintings done in the miniature technique.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 19, 1926

Rubber stealing in Singapore

Singapore, May 17: In the Legislative Council, Mr. Nizon, unofficial member, drew the attention of the Government to the alarming prevalence of rubber stealing on the Singapore Island, two of the largest estates losing 21,500 pounds in the month, altogether 5,000 pounds were stolen in the month representing a value of nearly a million dollars a year. Thieves started illicit tapping of trees in night time and also obtained rubber from coolies on the fields by bribing watchmen and even resorting to violence when interrupted. Government stated that they were prepared to appoint a commission.

From Page One

SC voices reservations on its own bail order

He said that the UAPA had drawn the threshold for denying bail so low that the state had to only show that the accusations against an accused were "*prima facie*" true. Once that was done, bail would be "absolutely impermissible" for him.

"The state need only satisfy a low *prima facie* threshold while the trial may continue for years with the result that pre-trial incarceration begins to acquire a post-trial punitive character, and even then, no court could ever grant bail no matter the length of period of such incarceration because the case stood *prima facie* made out against the accused," Justice Bhuyan noted.

Justice Bhuyan said the potency of Section 43-D (5) should be "melted" down by constitutional courts intervening and granting bail in UAPA cases in which the accused had already suffered prolonged incarceration due to delayed trial. A point in case was that of Mr. Khalid. "Constitutional courts can always intervene to grant bail despite satisfaction of the 'prima facie' threshold under Section 43-D(5). The Section need not control the grant of bail if the accused person's liberty is infringed for a prolonged period of time," Justice Bhuyan observed.

The power of a constitutional court to protect the right to life of a UAPA accused against arbitrary detentions cannot be diminished merely by a provision like Section 43-D(5) in a statute, the Bench highlighted.

"Section 43-D(5) remains subordinate to Article 21 [fundamental right to life] at all times. A constitutional court need not hold back bail to the accused in the garb of Section 43-D(5)," the Supreme Court underscored.

Justice Bhuyan said the basic principle that a person was presumed innocent until proven guilty was the "cornerstone of any civilised society governed by the rule of law". Section 43-D(5) converted delay in trial itself into punishment.

The court said statutes like the UAPA may calibrate the manner in which the presumption of innocence was applied, particularly in cases involving national security or terrorist offences, but they cannot altogether invert the constitutional relationship between liberty and detention.

The court expressed deep concern about certain of its verdicts "hollowing out" larger Bench verdicts like in the K.A. Najeeb case, which championed personal liberty against state abuse.

Modi meets Norway PM as they seek to raise ties

"From the Arctic to outer space, from green shipping to the blue economy, and from energy security to food security, our cooperation is touching new frontiers," Mr. Modi added, saying that the EFTA deal would aim to create $100 billion in investment and "one million jobs in India".

Mr. Støre called India "a leading global force in technology, innovation, and renewable energy", disclosing that he had accompanied a previous Norwegian PM, Jens Stoltenberg, to India in 2001.

In a possible reference to the Russia-Ukraine war, Mr. Støre acknowledged there were differences between India and Norway, but that it was necessary to work through them. Norway, which has urged India to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine in the past and to reduce its intake of Russian oil, is also hoping to offer India alternative supplies of oil and gas that Norway is a major exporter of. "We have to stand up against those who weaponise diplomacy, who weaponise trade, and who weaponise technology. At a time of rising protectionism and more tense geopolitical dynamics, it is more important than ever to stand together for a rule-based order," Mr. Støre said, possibly referring not only to Russia, but also the U.S. and China on unilateralism and protectionism, as well as Iran for the Strait of Hormuz blockade that has held up global energy trade.

Mr. Støre said that Norway and India "do not always see eye to eye on all issues", which was common. "We are both respectful democracies who handle those issues in ways that live up to democratic standards," he added. As the two leaders completed their statements, the event saw an unusual moment when a Norwegian journalist stood up to protest the fact that the Prime Ministers did not take questions from the media from both countries present. At Mr. Modi's earlier stop in the Netherlands too, local Dutch media had objected to the lack of a press conference as is customary there. While Mr. Modi did not respond to the question, Mr. Støre returned to the media room afterwards, and gave interviews to local Norwegian media. India and Norway also signed a Triangular Development Cooperation to help Global South countries. The two sides also inked MoUs in areas of health, space, and digital public infrastructure partnerships.

(The reporter is in Norway at the invitation of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to cover the Nordic Summit)

Curb travel, use EVs: Ministry to PSU banks

It added that, as far as possible, such engagements should be attended through videoconferencing.

"All organisations may aim at replacing the petrol and diesel cars hired by them in their head offices and branch offices with electric cars as far as possible," the circular added. "Existing fleets shall be progressively transitioned to EVs in a phased manner."

NEET paper leak: CBI arrests Latur coaching centre owner

The agency says it recovered a chemistry question bank containing questions identical to those that appeared in the exam; the accused is said to be close to the chemistry lecturer who was earlier arrested; the coaching centre has nine branches

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

NEET case accused Shivraj Motegaonkar being led out of a court in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday arrested the owner of a coaching centre in Latur of Maharashtra for his alleged involvement in the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak. The agency has so far arrested 10 people in the case.

Shivaraj Motegaonkar is the owner of Renukai Chemistry Classes Coaching Institute, which gives coaching for the undergraduate medical examination, said officials. It has nine branches with its main office in Latur. He is said to be close to chemistry lecturer P.V. Kulkarni, who is associated with the National Testing Agency (NTA) and was earlier arrested by the CBI for his alleged role in leaking chemistry questions that appeared in the examination on May 3.

Searches conducted on the premises of the institute and Mr. Motegaonkar's residence resulted in the recovery of a chemistry question bank, which contained questions identical to those that appeared in the examination, the agency said.

"In the last 24 hours, the CBI has also conducted searches at five locations at various places and seized several incriminating documents, laptops, and mobile phones. Detailed analysis of the seized items is going on," it said.

The CBI registered the case on May 12 following a written complaint from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. Subsequently, special teams were formed to pursue the leads.

Among those arrested earlier is senior botany teacher Manisha Gurunath Mandhare from Pune, who allegedly leaked biology questions. "She had complete access to the botany and zoology question papers. During April 2026, she had mobilised prospective NEET examination candidates through Manisha Waghmare of Pune (already arrested on May 14) and conducted special coaching classes for these students at her Pune residence," the agency previously said.

According to the CBI, during those classes she explained and disclosed various questions from botany and zoology subjects and made the students note down the same and also mark it in their textbooks. A majority of these questions tallied with the actual question paper.

Ms. Waghmare, a beauty salon owner, had also allegedly helped Mr. Kulkarni in mobilising students. The others arrested in the case are Dhananjay Lokhande from Ahilyanagar and Shubham Khairnar from Nashik in Maharashtra; Mangilal Biwal, Vikas Biwal, and Dinesh Biwal from Jaipur; and Yash Yadav from Gurugram.

"Investigation is continuing with the special teams and the investigation conducted so far has brought out the actual source of the leakage of chemistry and biology papers which were circulated before the examination," said the CBI, adding that the "middlemen" who helped in getting prospective candidates to attend the special coachingclasses where the papers were discussed have also been arrested.

Nearly 23 lakh candidates had registered for the test, which was administered by the NTA across the country.

RTI Act does not apply to Cricket Board, says CIC order

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Central Information Commission (CIC) on Monday held that the BCCI does not fall within the ambit of a "public authority" under the RTI Act, observing that the cricket board functions as an autonomous body neither "directly nor indirectly" financed by the government.

Information Commissioner P.R. Ramesh held that the BCCI, registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, was "neither established by the Constitution, nor created by any legislation or government order". "Since the Board of Control for Cricket in India is neither materially dependent upon nor sustained by government funds, it does not satisfy the requirement of being "substantially financed, directly or indirectly, by funds provided by the appropriate government" under Section 2(h)(d) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 and therefore cannot be regarded as a 'Public Authority' thereunder", held the CIC while dismissing the plea, filed by Geeta Rani.

Parliament committee to review NTA reforms

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports will on May 21 seek the views of top Education Ministry officials on the NEET-UG paper leak and on reforms of the National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts centralised admission tests for various higher education courses, a Rajya Sabha notice said.

The agenda includes a review of the implementation of the K. Radhakrishnan Committee report on NTA reforms, as well as an update on the investigation into the alleged paper leak.

U.S. prosecutors drop fraud charges against Gautam Adani in solar project case

Associated Press
NEW YORK

U.S. prosecutors asked a judge on Monday to dismiss criminal fraud and conspiracy charges against Indian billionaire Gautam Adani, who had been accused of duping Wall Street investors who poured billions of dollars into a massive solar project in India.

Mr. Adani, one of the world's richest people, was accused in 2024 of paying massive bribes to ensure the project's success.

He was indicted in federal court in Brooklyn on charges of conspiracy, securities fraud and wire fraud charges in connection with a lucrative arrangement for Adani Green Energy Ltd. and another firm to sell 12 gigawatts of solar power to the Indian government. The Adani Group had denied the allegations at the time, calling them baseless.

Gautam Adani

"The Department of Justice has reviewed this case and has decided, in its prosecutorial discretion, not to devote further resources to these criminal charges against individual defendants," prosecutors wrote in a court filing.

The judge must still approve the request.

Lawyers for Mr. Adani and his co-defendants consented to the request, prosecutors said.

Mr. Adani's lawyer, Robert Giuffra, declined to comment. Lawyers Timothy Sini and Sean Hecker, who represent Mr. Adani's nephew and co-defendant Sagar Adani, also declined to comment.

Police file FIR against 10 govt. staffers for not doing Census work

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Gurugram police in Haryana have registered a first information report against 10 government employees, including school teachers, for allegedly not performing Census-related work.

On May 17, the Census Officer of Municipal Corporation Gurugram filed a complaint at the Police Station City, Gurugram, regarding 10 employees who failed to perform their assigned Census duties. Based on the complaint, two separate FIRs were registered under Section 11 of the Census Act, 1948, at the Gurugram police station, the police said. The offence is punishable by fine and maximum imprisonment of three years.

The Census official alleged that the government employees who were assigned the duty of Census enumerators defied government orders by not collecting data and not making a single entry in the designated house listing operation mobile app, despite repeated warnings.

"Their non-compliance has caused obstruction in the census process. The police team is currently investigating the matter, and further action will be taken as per rules and regulations," the Gurugram Police said in a statement.

Delhi HC refuses urgent relief to Vinesh Phogat over Asian Games selection trials

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to grant immediate relief to wrestler Vinesh Phogat on her plea seeking a direction permitting her to compete in the selection trials on May 30-31 for this year's Asian Games.

The 31-year-old, who retired following her disqualification from the 2024 Paris Olympics and gave birth to a boy in July last, reversed her retirement decision in December 2025.

Vinesh Phogat

WFI policy

"You [Ms. Phogat] have already been declared ineligible. How can we grant you that relief without hearing the other side... The [WFI] policy will have to be looked into. There are competing interests. Yes, we appreciate [that you were on a maternity break], but at the same time, national interest is there," Justice Kaurav remarked orally. The court permitted her to give a "comprehensive reply" to the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) on the show-cause notice issued to her over accusations of indiscipline and anti-doping rule violations.

It directed the WFI to take the notice to "its logical conclusion" by July 6 and place its decision before it.

Senior counsel representing Ms. Phogat argued that while internationally, the ranking and status of women athletes on maternity leave are protected, the latest WFI policy excluded her.

Bar on participation

Ms. Phogat's counsel said there was "something more than what meets the eye" in this case, as she was barred from participating in a competition in Gonda on May 10-11 after the show-cause notice was issued to her a day before.

The court listed the matter for hearing on July 6.

The WFI had declared Ms. Phogat ineligible to participate in domestic events till June 26, 2026, citing the mandatory six-month notice period linked to athletes returning from retirement under anti-doping rules. She, however, showed up at the National Open Ranking Tournament in Gonda.

Ms. Phogat had participated in the protest by women wrestlers in 2023 against alleged sexual harassment by the WFI's then-president Brijbhushan Sharan Singh.

CAA applicants must declare passport status, surrender foreign passports: Ministry

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Applicants seeking citizenship under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 will have to submit an affidavit declaring whether they hold a valid or an expired passport from Pakistan, Afghanistan or Bangladesh, according to an amendment to the Citizenship Rules notified by the Union Home Ministry on Monday.

The move comes days after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power for the first time in West Bengal where a large number of the Matua community, the intended beneficiaries of CAA, reside.

Most of the Matuas, who migrated from neighbouring Bangladesh during different time-periods. do not have sufficient documents to apply for citizenship under the CAA. The 2019 legislation, which became effective on March 11, 2024 through the notification of CAA Rules, requires an applicant to declare that they are foreigners along with a document issued by any government authority in Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan establishing their roots in the three countries.

The CAA Rules also enable local priests or a "locally reputed community institution" to issue the mandatory certificates certifying the faith of an applicant.

CAA facilitates citizenship to six non-Muslim communities – Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Jain, Buddhist and Christian – from the three countries of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who entered India before December 31, 2014.

On Monday, the Ministry inserted a paragraph in Schedule 1C of the CAA application form where the applicant must declare if he/she is "not in possession of a valid and/or expired passport(s) issued by the Government of Pakistan/Afghanistan/Bangladesh." The form requires the applicant to provide the date and month of their entry to India and adds that they can be deprived of citizenship if the information is found to be incorrect.

The inserted paragraph added that if the applicant is "in possession" of a valid or expired passport, then details such as the passport number, date and place of issue, date of expiry are to be provided and the passport is to be surrendered before the Senior Superintendent of Post or Superintendent of Post within 15 days of approval of citizenship application, the notification said.

Before the Assembly elections were declared in West Bengal, the MHA, in the months of February and March, notified four committees headed by Central government officials to clear the citizenship applications.

Jairam initiates privilege notice against Pradhan over 'impugned' remarks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

House row: Dharmendra Pradhan's comments lowered the dignity of Parliament, says Jairam Ramesh. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR/PTI

Jairam Ramesh, Congress Chief Whip in the Rajya Sabha, on Monday moved a privilege notice against Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan for his "derogatory" remarks that allegedly lowered the dignity of Parliament.

In his notice, Mr. Ramesh cited the Union Minister's remarks at a press conference on May 15.

The Minister, responding to a question on why the government did not implement the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education on the National Testing Agency (NTA), said, "I will not comment on Parliamentary Standing Committee red flags. I will speak about the High-Level Committee of Experts (HLCE)/Radhakrishnan Committee. The Parliament Standing Committee has members from the Opposition. They write things in a certain manner; you also know that. Hence, I won't speak on the standing committee."

Mr. Ramesh said these "derogatory" comments revealed the Minister's "contempt for Parliament". "He has made these outrageous remarks while presiding over the rot in the Education Ministry that is destroying the future of lakhs of youth across the country," he said in a post on X.

He said the parliamentary committees were an extension of Parliament and were rightly referred to as mini-Parliament. "They [comments] are highly derogatory and seek to malign parliamentarians, parliamentary committees and the Parliament of India," he said. He also underlined that members of a parliamentary standing committee were drawn from all political parties.

"The Minister's impugned comments clearly indicate and reveal his contempt for the Parliament, parliamentary committees, members of the parliamentary committee that are drawn from all political parties and India's constitutional democracy itself," the former Union Minister said.

Mr. Ramesh said Mr. Pradhan had "deliberately lowered the stature and prestige of the institution of the standing committee simply because of its bipartisan nature".

"The Minister's comments are also tantamount to imputing dishonourable motives to members of parliamentary committees themselves," he said, and added, it was well established that any derogatory references to parliamentary committees or members of parliamentary committees constituted a "gross contempt" of parliamentary committees.

India now free from Naxalism, says Home Minister at Bastar

Shah was on his first visit since March 31, the deadline set by Centre to eliminate Left-wing extremism from country; laying down road map for development, he says whatever Bastar lost over decades will be restored in the next three to five years

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

Paying homage: Home Minister Amit Shah offers floral tributes to soldiers who lost their lives in anti-Naxal operations at the 'Amar Vatika' memorial in Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, on Monday. ANI

Hailing the sacrifices of security forces in the decades-long battle against Naxalism, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday proclaimed that the country was "free" from Naxalism.

"I am declaring with pride, India is now Naxal-free," the Home Minister said in Bastar, where he was on his first visit after March 31, a date the Centre had earlier decided as a deadline to eliminate Left-wing extremism from the country.

Mr. Shah laid down a road map for the development of the region and said that whatever Bastar, once the citadel for Maoists in the country, had lost in decades would be brought back in the next three to five years.

Addressing an audience comprising personnel from various forces involved in anti-Naxal operations, along with the family members of security personnel and civilians who lost their lives in Naxal violence, Mr. Shah credited the bravery of the forces for meeting the objective of a Naxal-free India.

"There is hardly any force in the country whose jawans have not laid down their lives... From 1971 till 2026, the public suffered it like a nightmare. A lot of bloodshed took place. Three generations got wasted. I am very happy that our target which could not be finished in a lifetime was achieved by our brave jawans in three to four years," he said.

Mr. Shah said the country was by and large free from security challenges of Jammu and Kashmir, the Northeast and Naxalism, problems it was facing in 2014 when the Narendra Modi-led government assumed power at the Centre.

'70 service centres'

Earlier, Mr. Shah inaugurated the first security camp-turned-public service centre at a remote village in Bastar district and said 70 out of the total 196 security camps located in the erstwhile Maoist-affected areas of the State would be transformed into such centres over the next year and a half. These centres are named after freedom fighter Veer Gundadhur.

Mr. Shah said that when the government resolved to end Naxalism, the objective was not only to eliminate Naxalites but also to provide the poor tribal people of the region with all the facilities available in cities, so that their children can have a bright future.

"For decades, the Naxalites spread the misconception that they have taken up arms because there has been no development. The truth is that this region has not developed because the Naxalites took up arms. Within a year, our government will bring all the development work done in Raipur to your villages. You have the same right to every government facility as the people of big cities," the Minister added.

On Monday, Mr. Shah also felicitated senior Telangana police officers in Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, for their role in making Telangana a Naxal-free State.

The officers honoured included Telangana Director-General of Police C.V. Anand, State Security Advisor B. Shivadhar Reddy, Director-General of Police (Operations) Anil Kumar, and Malkajgiri Commissioner B. Sumathi, along with the State Intelligence Bureau team led by her.

At the event, he said Naxalism had never been confined to one region and had remained a matter of national concern, including in his home state of Gujarat.

(With inputs from The Telangana Bureau)

Centre hid fuel crisis ahead of polls, says Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday accused the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "hiding" the state of the economy before the Assembly elections as that would have damaged their poll prospects. Mr. Kharge alleged the Centre lacked foresight and had concealed the impact of rising prices until the conclusion of the elections, after which fuel and commodity prices began going up.

His remarks came a day after the Centre raised CNG prices for the second time in a week. The hike followed Friday's increase in petrol and diesel prices by ₹3 a litre, attributed to rising global crude oil prices amid the U.S.-Israel war on Iran.

"The poor in the country are not even able to get the essential goods they deserve," Mr. Kharge said.

Zero tolerance towards attack on police personnel, says Bengal CM

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Offering support: West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari meeting injured CRPF personnel in Kolkata on Monday. ANI

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Monday said that at least 40 persons had been arrested over the Park Circus violence incident.

Meanwhile, the number of persons apprehended in Friday's violence in Asansol has increased to 26.

Mr. Adhikari, who met police personnel injured in Sunday's violence at the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police at Park Circus, issued a strict warning to protesters. "I am giving a clear message that there will be zero tolerance towards this kind of unrest, hooliganism and anti-national, anti-social activities. We will not allow such things to continue," the newly elected Chief Minister said. He met with Kolkata Police officers, South-east Division, to assess law and order in the area.

"We will give you complete support to stop this. Any democratic movement is always welcome, but hooliganism is not allowed by us... Stay strong and we will give you full cooperation. Raising hand on the police will not be allowed by the present government," Mr. Adhikari said. Six police personnel were injured in Sunday's violence.

This came after violence broke out on Sunday afternoon after a crowd gathered at the seven-point crossing of the Park Circus area in the heart of Kolkata to protest several issues, including restrictions on prayers on roads and the crackdown with bulldozers, in the past two weeks since the BJP government took charge.

"Do not think old rules still apply. If anyone believes the police force will continue to function with tied hands, they are mistaken," the Chief Minister warned.

On Friday night in Asansol, tensions flared after a mob allegedly pelted stones and vandalised a police post following complaints against the decibel level of loudspeakers at a mosque.

"A total of 26 accused persons were arrested and produced before the Ld. Court today. Of them, seven accused have been remanded to police custody, while 19 have been sent to judicial custody," the Asansol-Durgapur police said in a statement on Sunday.

The police said they were investigating further, and planned to arrest other miscreants involved in the violence. Damages would be assessed and compensation taken from the miscreants remanded in connection with the vandalism, the police said.

Modernising police

Promising modernisation of the police force within six months, Mr. Adhikari urged the Central government to retain 40 companies of Central paramilitary forces in West Bengal for some more time.

AAP Goa leader arrested in fraud case for not joining BJP: Kejriwal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday arrested AAP leader Deepak Singla in an alleged money laundering case following searches in Delhi and Goa, as per agencys officials.

"Searches have been conducted at the Delhi and Goa premises of Deepak Singla, and other 'hawala' operators," an agency official said. "Deepak Singla along with his uncle Ashok Kumar Mittal, brother Raman Singla and Harish Singla, allegedly defrauded Oriental Bank of Commerce of more than ₹150 crore. The money was sent to controlled firms in Singapore," the official said.

Meanwhile, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal on Monday defended Mr. Singla and alleged that he had been arrested for refusing to join the BJP.

Hitting back, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said that the arrest had exposed yet another dark face of the AAP.

'Politicial decision must on cut-off for mid-term polls under the simultaneous election system'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A decision on the definition of the "remainder of the term" of the Lok Sabha or the Assemblies before an election is held will be a political one to be taken in consultation with political parties, P.P. Choudhary, Chairman of Joint Parliamentary Committee on simultaneous elections, said on Monday.

"Assuming the government loses majority after two-and-a-half years, mid-term election for the remaining two-and-a-half years' period can be held. However, a decision has to be made for a situation when the majority is lost with six months or three months left before the end of the term. The decision to have a cut-off time to determine the remainder of the term will have to be a political one in consultation with parties," Mr. Choudhary told pressperson here.

He was speaking after holding consultations with various stakeholders on the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024 and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill on the issue of simultaneous elections.

He suggested that an amendment to anti-defection legislation would be required while President's Rule can be applied for the remainder of the term.

Asked about a situation where a fractured mandate prevents formation of government, Mr. Choudhary said that there is a mechanism to resolve it.

P.P. Choudhary

"Fractured mandate can be in any system. Various suggestions have come on how the synchronisation can be achieved. Discussions are under way on the remainder of term."

Pointing out that the Constitution's 93rd amendment for local bodies that has addressed the remainder of the term, Choudhary said, "When that can be achieved at the grassroots level, why cannot it be incorporated in State Assemblies and Parliament? There could also be a possibility of electing a Chief Minister by the Assembly."

Old dilemma

"Nowhere in the world you see elections taking place for five or six Assemblies every year. Every one is affected in the chain. Programmes are not reaching people. Teachers are burdened with election work. It is important for elections to be conducted together." He pointed out that general elections and elections to State Assemblies were conducted simultaneously in four elections between 1952 and 1967.

To another question on whether it was going to be 'One Nation-One Party' system, Mr. Choudhary asked, "Do you think what happened between 1952 and 1967 was for one party? It is not being proposed by the Prime Minister [Narendra Modi]. The Election Commission had recommended it in 1980; Law Commission of India has recommended thrice in the past; and Parliamentary Standing Committee has recommended simultaneous elections in 2015."

CENTRAL ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
6th, 7th, & 8th Floor, Tower-B, World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi-110029
केन्द्रीय विद्युत नियामक आयोग CERC
सत्यमेव जयते

Petition No. 121/TL/2026 Dated: 13.5.2026

NOTICE UNDER CLAUSE (a) OF SUB-SECTION (5) OF SECTION 15 OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT, 2003

An application under Sections14 &15 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (the Act) has been made by **SR and ER Power Transmission Limited**, B-9, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi – 110016 to establish the inter-State transmission system for the "Strengthening between SR Grid and ER Grid" (hereinafter referred to as "the Project") on a Build, Own, Operate and Transfer Basis consisting of the following elements:

S. No.	Name of the Transmission Element	Scheduled COD as per Gazette Notification	% of Quoted Transmission Charges recoverable on the Scheduled COD of the Element of the Project	Element(s)which are pre-required for declaring the commercial operation (COD) of the respective Element
1.	Angul – Srikakulam 765 kV 2nd D/C line with 240 MVAr SLR at both ends on both circuits • 765 kV line bays-2 Nos. GIS (at Srikakulam) • 765 kV line bays – 2 Nos. AIS (at Angul) • 765 kV, 240 MVAr SLR at Srikakulam-2 Nos. (6x80 MVAr switchable units) • 765 kV, 240 MVAr SLR at Angul-2 Nos. (7x80 MVAr switchable units incl. 1 spare unit)	30 months (3.8.2028)	97.50	-
2.	1x330 MVAr, 765 kV bus reactor (3rd) at Angul Substation • 765 kV bus reactor-1 No. (3x110 MVAr switchable units) • 765 kV bus reactor bay-1 No.		2.50	-

Notes:
I. POWERGRID shall provide space (free of cost) for 2 Nos. of 765 kV line bays each at Srikakulam (GIS) and Angul for termination of Angul-Srikakulam 765 kV D/c line.
ii. POWERGRID shall provide space (free of cost) for 1x330 MVAr bus reactor along with associated bay at Angul."

2. The Central Transmission Utility of India Limited, vide its letter dated 17.2.2026, has recommended for the grant of a transmission licence to the applicant to establish the proposed transmission system.
3. Based on the material available on the record, the Commission vide order dated 13.5.2026 in Petition No. 121/TL/2026, has proposed to issue a transmission licence to the applicant for the establishment of the transmission scheme as noted in para 1 above.
4. A copy of the application, along with its annexures and enclosures, made by the applicant for the grant of an inter-State transmission licence to **SR and ER Power Transmission Limited**, before the Commission can be accessed at the **www.powergrid.in/subsidiaries** or inspected by any person in the Commission's office by following the laid down procedure.
5. Notice is hereby given in pursuance of clause (a) of sub-section (5) of Section 15 of the Act that suggestions or objections, if any, to the Commission's proposal to grant a transmission licence to the applicant, as aforesaid, be sent to the undersigned by **23.5.2026** at the above noted address. The suggestions or objections received after the specified date shall not be considered.
6. The application shall be taken up for the further hearing by the Commission on **25.5.2026.** Any person who files suggestions or objections may in his/her discretion attend the hearing, for which no TA/DA shall be paid by the Commission.

Sd/-
(Harpreet Singh Pruthi)
Secretary

INBRIEF

13 killed in truck-container vehicle collision in Palghar

Thirteen people were killed and 20 injured in an accident in the Dhanivari region of Palghar district in Maharashtra on Monday, when a truck and a container vehicle collided on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad highway. According to the police, the truck was carrying at least 40 people from the Bapugaon region to Dhanivari for an engagement ceremony. The vehicle was travelling allegedly on the wrong side of the carriageway at the time of the accident and collided with the container lorry. A motorcycle was also caught in the accident, a statement by the Palghar district administration said. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced an *ex gratia* of ₹5 lakh each to the kin of the deceased.

Current risk of Ebola in India minimal, says Health Ministry

The Union Health Ministry has clarified that there was no reported case of Ebola in India and the current risk to the country remained minimal. The statement was issued on Monday with the Ministry noting that close monitoring of the recent outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus strain in parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda was being maintained. The WHO has declared the situation as Public Health Emergency of International Concern. "As a matter of abundant caution, surveillance and preparedness measures are being strengthened at points of entry and within the public health system," said an official.

Two church bodies offer to broker peace between Kukis and Nagas

Leaders of two church organisations meet Manipur Chief Minister Khemchand Singh in a bid to end the conflict between the two communities in the State; truck drivers stranded on highways demand security escorts to reach their destinations

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

Women from Naga, Meitei and Nepali communities stage a joint protest in Imphal demanding the immediate release of six civilians allegedly abducted by Kuki militants on Monday. ANI

Two church organisations have offered to broker peace between the Kukis and Nagas in ethnic conflict-scarred Manipur amid a "total shutdown" and an "economic blockade" affecting normal life across the State.

A 10-member team of church leaders, representing the Council for Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI) and the Manipur Baptist Convention (MBC), called on Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Monday to discuss the tense situation between the two tribal communities.

According to an official at the Chief Minister's Office, the church leaders volunteered to facilitate peace between the two communities. They offered to engage two teams for the purpose. While one team will travel to the Kuki-dominated Kangpokpi district, the other will travel to the Naga-majority Senapati district, which borders Nagaland.

More than 40 Nagas and Kukis were held hostage after unidentified gunmen killed three church leaders, belonging to the Thadou community, at Zero Point between Kotlen and Kotzim villages in Kangpokpi district on May 13.

A section of the Thadous resents being clubbed as Kuki, a set of tribes perceived by many non-Kukis as non-indigenous.

"The role being played by the church leaders in trying to defuse the situation arising out of the hostage crisis is laudable," the Chief Minister said, encouraging the CBCNEI and MBC to convince leaders of both communities.

"Hostages on both sides need to be released on humanitarian grounds urgently. Apart from talking to the Kuki community and church leaders, our team will travel to Kangpokpi to meet the family members of the three slain church leaders," a CBCNEI spokesperson said.

The church team will then travel to Senapati to meet Naga church leaders and key members of civil society organisations to discuss the prevailing situation and hostage crisis.

On May 15, various Kuki and Naga groups released 28 hostages – 14 each from both communities. The families and organisations of the two communities have been demanding the release of the remaining captives for peace to be ushered in.

Truckers' appeal

Hundreds of goods-laden and empty trucks have been stranded on highways in the State's Imphal Valley and Senapati district since a Kuki organisation imposed a "total shutdown" on May 13. The situation escalated after a Naga organisation enforced an "economic blockade" in Naga-inhabited areas on Sunday evening.

National Highway 2, the lifeline of Manipur, meanders through Senapati and Kangpokpi districts, connecting Imphal with the rest of the country.

"We have been stuck for the past five days and are facing an acute shortage of food and drinking water. Some people helped us with rice and *dal*, but that is not enough," a group of drivers of the stranded commercial vehicles said, appealing to the Manipur government to ensure their safe passage.

The truck drivers also sought security escorts to reach their respective destinations.

A Manipur government spokesperson said the security forces continued their search for the missing persons. He said combing operations were being carried out in Kangpokpi and Senapati districts.

Justice Varma case: inquiry panel submits probe report

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Judges Inquiry Committee investigating allegations against Justice Yashwant Varma – against whom impeachment proceedings were initiated over the discovery of unaccounted cash from his official residence during a fire – submitted its report to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday.

The report, which was presented in accordance with statutory requirements under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, will be laid before both Houses of Parliament in due course, officials said.

The three-member inquiry committee was constituted by the Speaker on August 12, 2025.

During a fire that broke out in the official residence of Justice Varma on the night of March 14, 2025, firefighters discovered massive amounts of burnt currency inside a storeroom.

An in-house committee constituted by former Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna concluded that Justice Varma had "active or tacit control" over the specific storeroom where the cash was hidden.

In July 2025, over 200 MPs signed a motion to impeach the judge.

'Cockroach' remark spawns a satirical political outfit

Amarjot Kaur
CHANDIGARH

Abhijeet Dipke, founder of Cockroach Janta Party, and, right, the mascot of the online outfit. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

On May 16, 30-year-old Abhijeet Dipke posted a Google form on X inviting people to register for the "Cockroach Janta Party" – a satirical political outfit born a day after Chief Justice of India Surya Kant drew criticism over his "cockroach" remark.

Though Chief Justice Kant later clarified that his oral observation was directed at those using fake degrees to enter professions such as law and media, and not at unemployed youth, the remark had already struck a nerve online.

Within hours, Abhijeet received over 5,000 registrations, transforming an Internet joke into an unofficial organisation channelling public discontent, humour, and political frustration.

"The Cockroach Janta Party expresses the dissent of young people against the statement made by the Hon'ble CJI, where he labelled the youth as cockroaches and parasites. It was unacceptable in a democracy like India, where the CJI of the Supreme Court, who is supposed to be the custodian of the Constitution and free speech, demeaned young people for their criticism," says Abhijeet, who is in the U.S., completing his Master's degree in public relations at Boston University.

He had previously volunteered with the social media team of the Aam Aadmi Party from 2020 to 2023.

Sending a message

"The name 'Cockroach Janta Party' shows that we own the identity of the cockroach – if that is what it takes for young people to be heard. It also seeks to send a message that cockroaches exist only in filth and rot. This means the country's system has become so rotten that the cockroaches now have to emerge," he says.

A quick glance at the Cockroach Janta Party's website gives an overview of its mission and vision. "We are not here to set up another PM CARES, holiday in Davos on the taxpayer's salary slip, or rebrand corruption as 'strategic spending'. We are here to ask – loudly, repeatedly, in writing – where the money went," its website reads. With its tagline as "Voice of the lazy and unemployed", the Cockroach Janta Party claims to represent the people that "the system forgot to count". With zero sponsors and five demands, it identifies as "one large, stubborn swarm".

As on May 18, Abhijit claims this "swarm" has grown into a collective of over 50,000 people who have met the four-point eligibility criteria – unemployed, lazy, chronically online, and can rant professionally – to become members of the Cockroach Janta Party.

"The vision is still evolving. Ideologically, we are a secular, socialist, democratic, and anti-caste organisation. Our ideology is inspired by Gandhi, Ambedkar, and Nehru," says Abhijeet.

Five-point manifesto

The party's five-point manifesto puts the spotlight on the institutions of democracy. Apart from 50% reservation of all Cabinet positions for women, its manifesto includes a 20-year ban on MLAs and MPs who defect from one party to another, investigating the bank accounts of "*godi* media" anchors, arresting the CEC under the UAPA if any legit vote is deleted, and barring post-retirement Rajya Sabha appointments for any Chief Justice.

The Cockroach Janta Party introduces India to a long tradition of countercultural political movements that have used satire, absurdity, and performance to critique mainstream politics. In the U.S., the trend emerged in the 1960s through the Freak Power movement led by Hunter S. Thompson and the Youth International Party, or Yippies, founded by activists Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin. In the early 2000s, Sweden witnessed the emergence of the Pirate Party, which channelled Internet culture and anti-establishment sentiment into a campaign for digital rights, privacy, and civil liberties.

Abhijeet hopes that this movement will tap into the concerns, needs, and hopes of the young population of India. "We are asking the nation to confront the reality that today's youth is losing hope in the system because it is no longer serving them, listening to them, or even seeing them. And the longer the system ignores this, the bigger the frustration will grow," he says.

SC asks CBI to furnish 'classified' documents to former RAW official

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to furnish "typed copies" of certain "sensitive" documents to a retired Army officer facing trial under the Official Secrets Act, 1923, for allegedly exposing irregularities within the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) in a book published in 2007.

A Bench of Justices J.K. Maheshwari and Atul S. Chandurkar observed that claims of confidentiality could not be invoked to deny the accused access to documents forming the basis of the prosecution, particularly when such material was integral to his defence. "When the demand for the documents was made by the accused himself, which is being used against him in a court proceeding, such documents ought to be supplied... we direct that the documents as referred to in the application be supplied for his defence within two months," it said.

The court was hearing a petition filed by Major-General V.K. Singh (retd), who had alleged irregularities within the RAW in his 2007 book *India's External Intelligence: Secrets of Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)*, published shortly after his retirement.

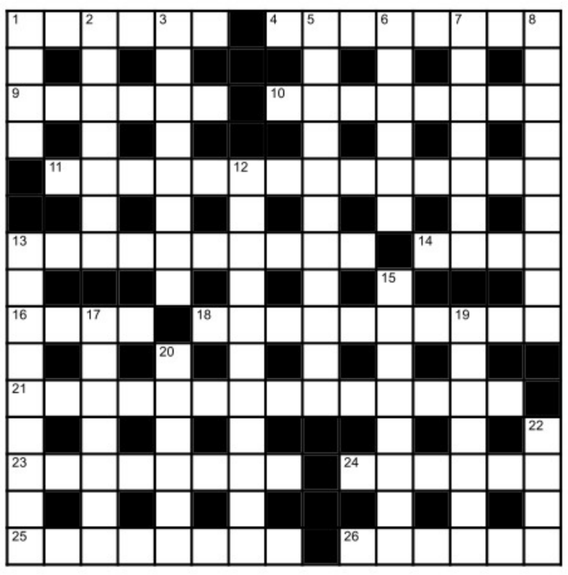
The CBI alleged that Mr. Singh, while serving as Joint Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat (RAW) between November 2002 and June 2004, had access to classified information relating to the intelligence agency in the course of his official duties.

TH CROSSWORD + 14797

(set by Avtaar)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Almost relaxed about conducting children's drill (6)
4 Recurrent mistake inhibiting No.1 in Open American championship (8)
9 Delivery of the French whiskeys reduced by 50% (6)
10 Non-combatant John defending criminal vilified after disappearance of female editor (8)
11 Following mushy, thick paella Avtaar will calm down (4,1,5,4)
13 Savoury can be chosen after starter for dinner (10)
14 Ebbing river that is close to Warsaw Embankment (4)
16 Show rear end of catheter removed from ass (4)
18 Menacing coach upset by stragglers, finally isolated places for late-comers? (10)
21 Chemical from mobile charging distorted resolution (14)
23 Male model exposed retrograde tendency to play favourites (8)
24 Round table made flat on both sides (6)
25 Confirming result briefly on phone (8)
26 Afternoon school's principal visiting faculty nowhere to be seen (6)

Down

1 Deposit left in knife dropped down (4)
2 Spike in upwardly mobile Mongolian Bohemians (7)
3 Old coins from Britain embodying earliest signs of unusually lavish luxury (8)
5 Bent lever is lit to control pressure in instrument (6,5)
6 Flyer to Rio leaving borders (6)
7 Party embracing the essence of quick unaided execution (7)
8 Hosts in stadium having come cycling (9)
12 President Brown visited by leader in Idaho introducing a boy (11)
13 Work out ending in Korean cinema about absolute authority (9)
15 Shortened course before spot of baked dessert (8)
17 Amidst work, actor uncovered organisation with extensive network (7)
19 Model again exercising. perhaps with energy, letting pressure off (7)
20 Siren's topless photograph linked to her missing husband (6)
22 Do without cocaine for semifinal run, say (4)

SUDOKU

5	6		9					
1	7						9	
		9						1
			7	2		1	4	
	3		6		9		7	
	2	7		3	1			
3						4		
	4						6	9
					3		1	8

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No.SS6885 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	1	8	2	6	4	3	9	7
7	2	6	3	5	9	8	4	1
9	4	3	1	7	8	5	6	2
8	3	2	9	1	5	4	7	6
1	7	5	4	3	6	9	2	8
4	6	9	8	2	7	1	5	3
3	9	1	6	4	2	7	8	5
2	8	7	5	9	3	6	1	4
6	5	4	7	8	1	2	3	9

FAITH

Varaha avatar significance

Lord Narayana descends in every yuga to protect the righteous and destroy the forces of evil. In the Bhagavad Gita, He declares: *Paritranaya Sadhunam, Vinasaya Cha Dushkritam, Dharma Samsthapanarthaya Sambhavami Yuge Yuge*. (The Lord incarnates in every age to protect devotees, destroy evil, and re-establish dharma.) Lord has three chakras associated with Him to protect us – Sudarsana Chakram, Jagath Chakram and Kalachakram.

In one of his discourses, Sri Velukkudi Krishnan Swamy emphasised that while material wealth naturally passes on to the next generation through inheritance, bhakti and spiritual wisdom should be instilled in children from a young age. That is the greatest inheritance parents can offer. Among the four yugas, many divine incarnations of Bhagavan appeared during Krita Yuga, including Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha and Vamana.

The significance of Varaha avatar has been glorified by saints and acharyas such as Ramanuja, Nammazhvar and Parasara Bhattar. Lord explains that through His divine power, Maya Shakti, all beings move according to their karma. Yet among them, those who surrender to Him with devotion are especially protected by Him.

The central teaching of the Varaha avatar is that spiritual duties and practices meant for a particular stage of life should be performed at the proper age itself, rather than postponed till old age. Lord Varaha assures that if a devotee sincerely prays to Him while he is healthy, the devotee will be remembered and protected by Him in his final moments, ultimately guiding him toward the supreme abode, Vaikuntha.

INBRIEF

Nifty closes flat, most stocks decline on costly oil

The benchmark Nifty 50 closed flat even as oil prices soared to $110 a barrel and the rupee depreciated to ₹96.2 against the U.S. dollar on Monday. The headline numbers showed a marginal 0.03% increase in Nifty which closed at 23,649.95 points. Investors sold massively, pulling the index by 1.18% by around 10:00 a.m. The selling was, however, compensated by buying, as IT sector stocks had become cheaper, making it the only sectoral index that gained more than 2.4% at closing. Of all the 21 sectoral indices, 13 declined, with some of them slipping more than 1.9%. The top five stocks on Nifty 50 were concentrated on two sectors – banking and technology. Further, nearly 70% of the 3,414 stocks that traded, declined.

Fertiliser subsidy bill for FY27 may rise by ₹70,000 crore

The government's fertiliser subsidy bill for 2026-27 may surge by ₹70,000 crore to ₹2.41 lakh crore, driven by rising import costs of urea and other fertilisers amid the ongoing West Asia crisis, a senior official said on Monday. Aparna S. Sharma, Additional Secretary, Department of Fertilisers, on the sidelines of inter-ministerial briefing on West Asia developments, said, "The subsidy bill will go up, but what percentage is something I cannot say." On whether the increase could be as much as ₹70,000 crore, she said, "may be." The budgetary allocation for fertiliser subsidies in 2026-27 stands at ₹1.71 lakh crore. Despite the cost pressures, Sharma said fertiliser availability for the 2026 kharif season remains "comfortable", with stocks exceeding 51% of the total requirement of 390 lakh tonne, the gap being bridged through diversified import sourcing. Current fertiliser stocks stand at 200.9 lakh tonne. Domestic production is running at approximately 80,000 tonne a day. PTI

Rupee declines to 96.2 against U.S. dollar as crude soars

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

The Indian rupee crossed the psychological mark of 96 a dollar, closing at 96.2, according to data from the Clearing Corporation of India (CCIL), even as Brent crude prices continued to increase.

The foreign exchange rate is up 6.3% since January 1, 2026. The depreciation is primarily due to the increase in oil prices with Brent Crude Futures at $110.8 a barrel and WTI Crude Futures at over $102.7 a barrel.

Foreign funds have withdrawn more than ₹2 lakh crore in equities, adding pressure to the depreciating rupee. In May alone, foreign institutional investors sold ₹24,829 crore in equities. The outflow is expected to continue and will put a lot more depreciation pressure on the rupee, said analysts.

"The broader trend for the rupee remains weak, with markets closely watching India's strategic efforts to secure lower-cost oil and gas supplies to ease pressure on the import bill and forex reserves. Continued FII selling and global risk aversion are also adding to volatility in the currency market. Technically, rupee support is now seen near 96.55, while immediate resistance is placed around 96.00-96.10," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst – Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities.

Diesel shortage chokes truck movement in several pockets

Supply chain distribution hit as truckers complain of lack of fuel availability or diesel supply restricted to about ₹5,000 worth of fuel at a time; dealers flag halting of credit facility by oil firms

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Even as the Union Government and oil marketing companies are claiming that there is no shortage of petroleum products all over the country, transporters and retail customers from various parts of India have reported short supply of diesel and petrol over the past few days.

While diesel shortage has been attributed to diversion for industrial use and the inability of pump owners to ensure assured supplies, rationing of petrol due to panic buying has resulted in pumps running dry. In some cases, pump owners resort to hoarding to take advantage of price hike in the future, said sources aware of the developments.

"Members from various parts [of the country] are reporting short supply of diesel, which is hampering free movement of trucks. This is being caused by industrial customers buying in retail and pump owners restricting supply of diesel to trucks," said Abhishek Gupta, General Secretary of the All India Transporters Welfare Association.

According to some transporters, there are pockets where fuel supply is restricted, but the situation has not gone out of hand.

"The primary reason is understood to be pump owners holding stocks in anticipation of price hikes and industrial demand being fulfilled via retail where discount is available," said a transporter.

Tanking up: Diesel shortage is attributed to diversion for industrial use and that of petrol due to panic buying. SIDDHANT THAKUR

There is a price difference of about ₹30 to ₹50 per litre between diesel meant for commercial/industrial use and retail fuel.

Social media is flooded with videos of long queues at petrol pumps and supplies to retail customers restricted to just ₹100 or ₹200 worth of fuel in the case of two-wheelers and up to ₹2,000 for four-wheelers, after long hours of waiting. Several truckers are also seen complaining about either lack of fuel availability or supplies restricted to only ₹5,000 worth of fuel at a time.

This had slowed down truck movement, causing supply chain distributions, they said. Some petrol and diesel dealers pointed out that oil marketing companies had stopped providing credit facility to dealers and this had created cash flow issues, hindering supplies.

> This [shortage] is due to industrial customers buying in retail and pump owners restricting supply to trucks
>
> **ABHISHEK GUPTA,** General Secretary, All India Transporters Welfare Association

Ever since the West Asia conflict broke out and the Strait of Hormuz was shut leading to escalation in crude oil prices, oil marketing companies are reluctant to engage in competition among themselves to reduce under recoveries. "Earlier there was intense competition among oil marketing companies and they used to give credit of three to four days to dealers. This has been stopped since the first week of March, soon after the war broke out," said Ravi Shinde, former president of the Petrol Dealers Association, Mumbai.

"This has created cash flow issues, and dealers, who used to order two tankers a day, are now getting one on upfront payment. The situation gets worse on Saturdays and Sundays when the banking channel does not work to process payment," he said.

According to pump owners, when a pump goes dry due to unavailability of fuel, the pressure shifts to the nearby pump, leading to long queues and shortages of supply to retail customers.

Sometimes, rumours on social media of a likely steep hike in prices is also causing panic buying, said people familiar with the developments.

Owing to under recoveries, due to a loss of about ₹100 per litre of diesel, there is reluctance on the part of OMCs to sell more. They appear to be conserving inventories in the hope of better future pricing.

Now that international crude oil has touched $113 a barrel, the alarm bell has started ringing. Meanwhile prices of essential groceries have gone up substantially, adding to the woes of households.

'OMC losses down to ₹750 crore per day following fuel price hike'

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Following the ₹3 hike in the prices of petrol and diesel on May 16, the losses being incurred by oil marketing companies (OMCs) from liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), petrol and diesel combined have come down by ₹250 crore a day to ₹750 crore at present, said Joint Secretary at the Union Petroleum Ministry Sujata Sharma.

"Under-recovery is still there, and losses for the OMCs continue to occur. It is now estimated to be in the range of about ₹750 crore per day," the senior official told reporters on Monday at the bi-weekly inter-ministerial briefing on the situation in West Asia. "That includes LPG, petrol and diesel combined," she added.

Further, in response to a question from *The Hindu*, Ms. Sharma said no bailout package for OMCs is under consideration at present.

"Bailout package for OMCs is still not on the table," she stated.

On May 10, Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had said that the OMCs were making losses of about ₹1,000 crore per day, from buying crude, gas and LPG at higher prices and shielding consumers by selling the three retail fuels at lower prices. With the latest hike in the price of petrol and diesel, the losses have been trimmed by ₹250 crore per day.

'Will buy Russian oil if it makes commercial sense'

Saptaparno Ghosh
Suhasini Haidar

Two days after U.S.' second waiver on Russian oil purchases expired, the Centre emphasised India's oil-marketing companies (OMCs) would continue purchasing crude from Moscow should they be commercially viable.

At the bi-weekly briefing on West Asia, Sujata Sharma, Joint-Secretary, Union Petroleum Ministry, said, "We have been purchasing [crude oil] from Russia earlier - before the waiver, during the waiver and now also - it is basically [that] commercial sense, which should be there for OMCs to purchase."

In the wake of the escalating tensions in West Asia, the U.S. had granted a month-long waiver on buying Russian and Iranian oil.

While the Iranian waiver lapsed April, the extended waiver on Russia expired May 16. With the latest waiver in place, India's import of Russian crude surged to 1.96 million barrels a day as of May 15 since the start of the month vis a vis 1.57 million barrels a day in April, Kpler data show. This surge indicates Indian refiners rushing to secure stable supply.

May-Elin Stener

Norway ready to supply

Speaking to *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the Nordic Summit, Norwegian Ambassador May-Elin Stener stated amid the Russian situation, Oslo was ready to supply energy to India.

"Well, we will discuss these issues (expiry of U.S. waiver for Russian oil purchases) with India and of course, we also have an understanding of the needs of the fastest growing big economy in the world," she stated, adding, "What exactly would be the result, that I cannot say now."

Norwegian government data show it exported 56.6 million barrels of oil in March or 27.3% higher than comparable period last year. It also exported 10.2 billion standard cubic metre of natural gas in the same period, although 0.3% lower year-on-year.

TVS VENU to buy a stake in Jana SFB

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

TVS VENU has agreed to acquire a minority stake in Jana Small Finance Bank Limited (Jana) through a combination of primary issuance of warrants and a secondary purchase for an equity ownership of up to 9.9% on a fully diluted basis, which includes 4.9% to be owned by TVS Motor Company. TVS Venu has a long-standing presence in India's financial services via TVS Credit Services. It has also signed pacts to buy 100% stake in PGIM India Asset Management.

Jana is present in mass retail and MSME banking. With over 12 million customers, it has advances and deposits of more than ₹35,000 crore each as of March 31, 2026.

Paramotor Digital files confidential IPO papers

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Paramotor Digital Technology Ltd. has filed confidential draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) under the pre-filing route toward a potential initial public offering (IPO).

EU chief wants to seal pact on investment with India

Suhasini Haidar
T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
OSLO/NEW DELHI

President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen once again called for an investment pact between India and the European Union (EU), terming it a "missing piece of the puzzle" in bilateral cooperation plans.

Ms. von der Leyen was speaking at the European Business Round Table for Industry in Gothenburg, Sweden, where PM Narendra Modi also addressed.

The investment pact, being negotiated alongside the trade deal, was not finalised as the two sides could not agree on some key aspects, notable being dispute resolution.

'Half the equation'

"But trade is only half the equation," Ms. von der Leyen said. "Our next step must be to deliver an investment agreement. This is the missing piece of the puzzle in our reinforced economic cooperation, especially in a world where supply chains are being reshaped and economic security challenges us as never before. Deepening investment ties will help us to de-risk and diversify."

Narendra Modi with Swedish PM Ulf Kristersson and Ursula von der Leyen in Gothenburg.

During his address, Mr. Modi did not touch upon the investment agreement but instead highlighted the benefits of the trade deal and other pacts signed between the EU and India.

"The India-EU FTA will create new opportunities for industries, investors, and innovators," he said.

"The India-EU Trade and Technology Council has further deepened our cooperation. We are working together in areas such as digital technology, clean energy, semiconductors, resilient supply chains, and innovation."

'Opened the door'

In the 26 years between January 2000 and December 2025, European countries have invested a little more than $110 billion as direct investment in India, making up for about 14% of the total foreign direct investment India attracted during the period. However, the most recent years saw considerable volatility in the inflows from Europe.

For example, FDI from Europe stood at about $5.5 billion in 2025, having fallen from about $10.6 billion in 2024.

'Holding back pact'

People tracking India-EU talks said the biggest factor holding up the investment agreement were the differences between the two economies on dispute resolution. Other issues were concerns over land acquisition, judicial protection and exit clauses.

FCI to raise ₹50,000 crore

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) will raise short-term debt of ₹50,000 crore from scheduled banks for a three-month tenure with a green shoe option to mop up an additional ₹25,000 crore. PTI

KANNUR International Airport

KANNUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED
E-Tender - Baggage Wrapping, Meet & Greet and Other Allied Services

E-Tenders are invited by Managing Director, KIAL for Selecting an Agency to Operate & Manage Baggage Wrapping, Meet & Greet and Other Allied Services at Kannur International Airport.

For more details, please visit - www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.

E-Tender ID: 2026_KIAL_851153_1

Bid Submission Last Date: 5 June 2026, 1200 Hrs

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS - TIRUPATI
MARKETING DEPARTMENT — e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

e-Tenders are invited for supply of **(1) 16,500 kgs of Chilly powder (2) 90,000 Kgs of Cardamom (Elachi) 8 mm Size (CGEB) Variety** through e-tenders to the Marketing Department, T.T.Devasthanams. For Tender notice and tender details log on to the web site **http://www.tirumala.org** and **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in.** For further details contact phone numbers:**0877-2264079, 2264555, FAX No: 0877-2264554.**

TTD-40021(31)/1/2026-PRO SEC(Adv.No.50) Date:18-05-2026 — **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED
(A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking & An ISO 27001-2022 Certified Company)
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The APTRANSCO invites bids online for Spec.No.PMM11-e-30/2026: Supply of 16 Nos Acoustic Imaging Cameras. Date & Time of availability of above tender: **18.05.2026** at **5:00PM.** Websites: **www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** and **www.gem.gov.in.** Contact No. CE/Transmission: **0866- 2429230.**

R.O.No.GMCC/APTRANSCO/37/26-27 — **Sd/- Chief Engineer/Transmission**

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
SHORT TERM N.I.T. No. 04/2026-27

BIDs are invited in prescribed format from Bidders registered in appropriate class RRVPNL / A or AA class in Central/ state Government Department and their undertakings in the O/o The Respective Executive Engineer (Civil) RVPN in NIB No. 05 & 06/2026-27. All information regarding BIDs are available on **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, www.rvpn.co.in and http://sppp.raj.nic.in.**

UBN :- VPN2627WSOB00395 to VPN2627WSOB00398 (4), VPN2627WSOB00403 (1), VPN2627WSOB00405 (1), VPN2627WSOB00419 to VPN2627WSOB00431 (13), VPN2627WSOB00435 to VPN2627WSOB00437 (3)

Raj.Samwad/C/26/3011 — R.R.V.P.N./TR-7570/2026 — **Superintending Engineer (Civil), Jaipur**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER, NEW PUBLIC OFFICES, NRUPATUNGA ROAD, BANGALORE-560 001, Mobile : 9448999424, E-mail :ddpiplanning@gmail.com, WEBSITE:(http://www.schooleducation.kar.nic.in)

No:DPI-CPI0PLN1/IVA-TENDER/2026-27 — **Date:18.05.2026**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Office of the Commissioner, Department of School Education, Bengaluru invites short term tender for identification of Independent Verification Agency for developing 500 to 800 KPS in coordination with Asian Development Bank.

1	RFP Reference No.	**DPI/2026-27/SE0441/CALL-2**
2	Date of Commencement of Download of RFP Document from Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in	**18/05/2026 onwards**
3	Last Date and Time for uploading Online Queries in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal	**20/05/2026 5:30 PM**
4	Date and time of Pre-bid Meeting	**20/05/2026 11:00 AM** at the following venue: Office of Commissioner, School Education, First floor, New public office Building, Nrupatunga road, K R Circle, Bengaluru
5	Last Date and Time for uploading of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal	**27/05/2026 5:00 PM**
6	Date and Time of Online Opening of RFP Applications	**29/05/2026 11:00 AM**
7	Place of Opening of RFP Applications	**Online at Karnataka Public Procurement Portal**
8	Date and time of presentation for methodology on the project	**01/06/2026 12:00 PM**
9	Address for Communication	Office of the Commissioner, School Education, First floor, New public office Building, Nrupatunga Road, K R Circle, Bengaluru-560001, Email: ddpiplanning@gmail.com Contact: 080-22270072, 9448999424

Note: 1) Completed tenders shall be uploaded through e-tendering system by the Tenderers using their User ID on or before the last date & time stipulated. **2)** In the event of the specified date of opening of RFP being declared a holiday for the employer, the RFP will be opened on the next working day at the same time. **3)** Only Online Queries through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal will be accepted. Queries sent through letters, emails or any other mode will not be entertained.

DIPR/CP/JA/719/2026-27 — **Sd/- DDPI(PLANNING)**

NUUK

Greenlandic self-determination is non-negotiable, PM tells U.S. envoy

REUTERS

Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen said on Monday that he had a positive meeting with Donald Trump's special envoy to the Arctic territory, but noted there was "no sign that anything has changed" with the U.S. position. Mr. Nielsen said he made it clear that Greenlandic self-determination cannot be negotiated. AP

HAVANA

Cuba says it has right to defence as U.S. weighs alleged drone threat

REUTERS

Cuba's President said his country had a legitimate right to respond to a U.S. attack with claims circling that Havana is planning drone attacks. U.S. news site Axios reported that Cuba had obtained over 300 military drones with a view to attack American military vessels, the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay, and even Florida. AFP

TAIPEI

Taiwan says it would 'welcome' its President speaking to Trump

AP

Taiwan would "welcome" an opportunity for its leader to speak to U.S. President Donald Trump after he raised the possibility, Taiwan Deputy Foreign Minister said on Monday. Mr. Trump said on Friday that he had to speak to the man "running Taiwan" (an apparent reference to President Lai Ching-te) about arms sales. AFP

MADRID

Spain PM's party suffers record defeat in crucial Andalusia vote

REUTERS

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's Socialists suffered a historical drubbing in a regional election in Andalusia in what could be a dress rehearsal for a national vote next year, results showed on Monday. The Socialists won just 28 seats in the 109-seat regional Parliament, down two from four years ago, in Sunday's vote. AFP

Iran forms Hormuz Strait authority, demands coordination from vessels

Tehran establishes new maritime body to control and regulate transit through the waterway; move follows earlier Iranian proposals to charge tolls for passage while the strait remains effectively closed due to Iran's grip and a U.S. naval blockade

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran's top security body announced on Monday the formation of a new body to manage the Strait of Hormuz, which Tehran has effectively closed and wants to charge ships to traverse.

On its official X account, the Supreme National Security Council shared a post for the Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA) saying it would provide "real-time updates on the #Hormuz_Strait operations and latest developments."

The PGSA account later said in a post that it was "the legal and official representative authority of Iran responsible for managing transit through the Strait of Hormuz". It added that "navigation within the designated jurisdictional area of the Strait of Hormuz" required "full coordination" with the authority and that passage without authorisation would be considered illegal.

Quiet on the water front: Ships anchored in the Hormuz Strait, off the city of Khasab on Oman's Musandam Peninsula on Sunday. AFP

Earlier this month, Iranian English-speaking broadcaster Press TV said it constituted a "system to exercise sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz" and that ships passing through the strait were to be sent instructions by email.

Global chokepoint

Iran has largely blocked shipping through the vital strait since the outbreak of war with the U.S. and Israel in February.

Iran's grip over the waterway has rattled global markets and given Tehran significant leverage, while the U.S. has imposed its own naval blockade on Iranian ports.

In peacetime, the route accounts for roughly a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments, along with other key commodities including fertilizer.

Since the war began, Iran has repeatedly said that maritime traffic through the strait would "not return to its pre-war status" and last month it said it had received the first revenue from tolls on the waterway.

On Saturday, Ebrahim Azizi, head of the Iranian Parliament's national security commission, said Iran "has prepared a professional mechanism to manage traffic" through the strait, adding that it will be "unveiled soon".

Israeli forces intercept flotilla trying to reach blockaded Gaza

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Israeli forces intercepted a Gaza-bound aid flotilla on Monday after it sailed from Turkey last week, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denouncing the mission as a "malicious scheme" intended to support Hamas.

The Global Sumud Flotilla vessels are the latest in a string of attempts by activists to breach Israel's blockade of the Palestinian territory, with the last convoy intercepted by Israeli forces last month.

"Global Sumud Flotilla is under attack!" the group wrote on X.

"The Israeli occupation has again illegally and violently intercepted our international fleet of humanitarian vessels and abducted our volunteers." Around 50 ships had departed from southwestern Turkey on Thursday. Ankara slammed the interception, saying it was a "new act of piracy" by Israel.

A website tracking the flotilla's location showed several vessels intercepted near Cyprus; activists 'abducted': organisers

A website tracking the flotilla's location showed several vessels being intercepted west of Cyprus.

Indonesian newspaper *Republika* said nine Indonesians were part of the detained group, including two of its journalists.

Fifteen Irish citizens were on the flotilla, including Margaret Connolly, sister of President Catherine Connolly, organisers said.

Mr. Netanyahu condemned the latest attempt to deliver aid to Gaza by sea. He told the commander of the interception force, "I believe you are doing an extraordinary job... thwarting a malicious scheme designed to break the blockade we have imposed on Hamas terrorists in Gaza," according to a statement from his office.

'State terrorism'

Hamas political bureau member, Bassem Naim, condemned the interception, describing it as "state terrorism and systematic undermining of the entire international order".

Around 2 million Gaza residents are living with severe shortages of housing, food and medicine.

'Over 20 IS militants killed' in new strikes by Nigeria, U.S. forces

Associated Press
LAGOS

The Nigerian military said on Monday that a new operation with U.S. forces has killed more than 20 Islamic State group militants in Borno state.

The operation in Metele followed the killing of Abu Bakr al-Mainuki, deputy leader of the group's local West African "province". It was the first successful targeting of a senior militant leader by Nigerian forces after over a decade of insurgency by armed groups including Boko Haram.

The U.S. military said no U.S. or Nigerian forces were harmed in Sunday's strikes. A Nigerian military spokesperson said efforts "in close coordination" with the U.S. military were ongoing to "deny the terrorists any safe haven within Nigeria."

Nigeria's military has long used airstrikes against militants, sometimes hitting civilian populations. Earlier this month, Amnesty International accused the military of killing 100 civilians at a market while targeting militants. The military denied it.

Russia launches attacks on Odesa and Dnipro as Ukraine targets Belgorod

Reuters
ODESA

Russia struck the Ukrainian cities of Odesa and Dnipro in missile and drone attacks that damaged residential buildings and injured dozens of people, and Russian officials reported two deaths in Ukrainian drone strikes.

Ukraine's air force said Russia had launched 524 drones and 22 missiles in attacks that began on Sunday evening and continued overnight. The attacks followed a heavy Ukrainian drone attack on Moscow at the weekend.

Twenty-two people were hurt in Dnipro and a further eight were injured in the surrounding region, officials said.

Picking up the pieces: Municipal workers clean debris following an air attack in Dnipro on Monday. AFP

"Russia relies on ballistic missiles, and that is precisely why we in Europe must do everything possible to ensure reliable protection against this," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on X.

Ukrainian energy firm Naftogaz said drones had struck several of its facilities in the region.

Two killed, ships hit

Russian drones hit three foreign-flagged ships in the Black Sea heading to ports in the Odesa region, including a Chinese-owned cargo vessel, Ukrainian authorities said.

In Russia, drones were downed overnight in Rostov and Belgorod, Interfax news agency quoted the Defence Ministry as saying. Two people were killed and two injured in Belgorod region, local authorities said.

Keir Starmer will not set out a timetable to quit: U.K. Deputy PM

Reuters
LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who is under intense pressure to quit from within his Labour Party after a set of poor local election results, will not set out a timetable for his departure, his deputy David Lammy said on Monday.

The heavy losses for the party in the May 7 polls triggered almost a quarter of his lawmakers to call for him to go, and two rivals are vying to replace him.

"There will be no timetable for departure," Mr. Lammy told Sky News, adding that he had spoken to the Prime Minister twice on Sunday.

Top contenders

Lawmaker Wes Streeting, who quit as Health Minister last week, said on Saturday he would stand in any formal leadership contest. Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham is seeking a seat in Parliament that would allow him to make a challenge too.

Mr. Starmer has repeatedly said that he intends to fight any leadership challenge.

Sport

Joy for Rai as he clinches first Major

PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

Agence France-Presse
PHILADELPHIA

Aaron Rai won his first Major on Sunday, making birdies on four of the last eight holes to become the first Englishman since 1919 to win the PGA championship.

Rai sealed a tense back-nine shootout with a spectacular 68-foot birdie on the par-three 17th, firing his career-low Major round with a five-under 65 to finish 72 holes on nine-under 271 at formidable Aronimink.

Surreal feeling

"Very surreal," said Rai, who has fought a neck injury this year.

Swinging away: Rai sealed a back-nine shootout with a spectacular 68-foot birdie. GETTY IMAGES

He defeated two-time Major winner Jon Rahm of Spain and American Alex Smalley by three strokes with American Justin Thomas, Germany's Matti Schmid and Sweden's Ludvig Aberg sharing fourth on 275.

The 31-year-old took home a $3.69 million top prize from a record purse of $20.5 million and the Wanamaker Trophy after a dramatic final day.

Never better than 19th in 12 prior major starts, Rai won his third DP World Tour title last November in Abu Dhabi and his only PGA Tour title in 2024 at Greensboro.

World No.2 Rory McIlroy, who won his sixth major title at last month's Masters, shot 69 to share seventh on 276 with American Xander Schauffele and Australian Cameron Smith.

The defending champion Scottie Scheffler shot 69 to finish on 278.

The final scores (fourth-round, par-70): 271: Aaron Rai 70-69-67-65.
274: Jon Rahm 69-70-67-68, Alex Smalley 67-69-68-70.
275: Ludvig Aberg 72-66-68-69, Matti Schmid 69-72-65-69, Justin Thomas 69-69-72-65.
276: Rory McIlroy 74-67-66-69, Xander Schauffele 68-73-66-69, Cameron Smith 69-71-68-68.
277: Chris Gotterup 72-65-71-69, Kurt Kitayama 70-69-75-63, Patrick Reed 68-72-67-70, Justin Rose 70-73-65-69.

World Championship matches are special and bring a lot of excitement, says Muzychuk

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

Anna Muzychuk knows how to win big titles. The former World blitz and rapid champion isn't hazarding a guess on the probable victors in the championship matches – Open and women's, both featuring Indian players.

She felt psychological momentum and handling pressure could prove decisive in the summit contests. D. Gukesh, the defending champion, faces Uzbek Javokhir Sindarov in the men's title decider while R. Vaishali challenges China's Ju Wenjun for the women's crown. "It will be a very interesting clash. I'm looking forward to watching both of them (Open and women's finals) because the World Championship matches always stand out," Muzychuk, who will compete in Norway Chess, said in a virtual interaction on Monday.

Big target: Muzychuk is eyeing the World title in the classical format.

Muzychuk said a lot could change before the title showdowns as momentum and fortunes can swing drastically over time. "They are always special and they bring a lot of excitement, especially for the spectators. It's very hard to say who will win or who is the favourite because there is still a lot of time," the 36-year-old said.

The Ukraine Grandmaster, who featured in the recent Candidates in Cyprus after Koneru Humpy pulled out citing the conflict in West Asia, was all praise for Vaishali and Divya Deshmukh. "I don't think we should speak only about the Candidates because we know why Vaishali won the tournament... and it was a fantastic achievement. And, for Divya, things didn't go so well. But at the same time, they are top-level players."

Muzychuk, whose best in the classical World Championship format is a runner-up finish in 2017, said her "final" objective was to clinch the top prize before time runs out. "Yeah, it's the biggest goal that is left because I have won the World Rapid and Blitz titles".

NO BIG DEAL

'I don't think Sooryavanshi has a weakness against slower ball'

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

After change of pace proved effective in dismissing Vaibhav Sooryavanshi on Sunday, RR batting coach Vikram Rathour dismissed suggestions that it might be a weakness. "Nobody is perfect; I don't think slower ball is his weakness. On a pitch where the ball is gripping a bit, change of pace is good against anybody".

SPACE FOR EVERYONE

T20 success does not depend on power-hitting alone: Rathour

R.V. MOORTHY

Somebody like Virat Kohli is extremely successful, even in this format (T20). I won't call him an out-and-out power-hitter. That tells you that there's scope for everybody to succeed, provided you have belief in your abilities and can commit to whatever options you take while you are batting — Vikram Rathour, RR batting coach.

POOR STRATEGY

Bowling Ferreira in the 18th over was a bad move, says Gavaskar

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Handing the ball to Donovan Ferreira in the 18th over was a bad move. You are bringing a slow bowler on a pitch offering him no help. He was just bowling in the slot; it was his first over of the match. He had also scored a golden duck — Sunil Gavaskar criticises RR skipper Riyan Parag's tactic against DC.

RARE FEAT

Rahul is fifth batter to score fifty or more 50 times in IPL history

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

K.L. Rahul became the fifth batter to score fifty or more 50 times in IPL history. Rahul joined Virat Kohli (76 — nine centuries and 67 half-centuries), David Warner (66 — four and 62), Shikhar Dhawan (53 — two and 51) and Rohit Sharma (51 — two and 49) during DC's match against RR. Rahul has six tons and 44 half-centuries.

Cummins and Kishan show the way as Sunrisers secure spot in playoffs

Klaasen, too, plays a big role in the Hyderabad side's win; the result also confirms Titans' qualification while Super Kings' hopes hang by a thread

IPL-19

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

Sunrisers Hyderabad bowling coach Varun Aaron had hailed Heinrich Klaasen as the fulcrum of the batting unit on the eve of his side's clash against Chennai Super Kings.

On Monday, Klaasen justified that tag with a fine knock on a tricky surface to help his team beat Super Kings by five wickets in a vital IPL 2026 encounter at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium.

While Ishan Kishan headlined the chase with a measured half-century (70, 47b, 7x4, 3x6), it was Klaasen's 26-ball 47 (6x4, 2x6) that changed the course of the game.

SRH's second win over CSK this season booked it a place in the playoffs. The result, which also put Gujarat Titans in the climactic phase, left Super Kings' hopes hanging by a thread.

Chasing 181, Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma failed to get Sunrisers off to their usual flying start and they were in a spot of bother at 56 for two in the eighth over.

Klaasen, though, quickly went about tearing apart the Super Kings bowling attack with surgical precision.

The heroes: Kishan controlled the chase after Cummins' three-for restricted Super Kings to 180 for seven. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SCOREBOARD

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Sanju Samson c Kishan b Cummins 27 *(13b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad c Malinga b Cummins 15 *(21b)*, Urvil Patel b Sakib 13 *(8b, 2x6)*, Kartik Sharma c Nitish b Cummins 32 *(19b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Dewald Brevis b Malinga 44 *(27b, 2x4, 4x6)*, Shivam Dube b Sakib 26 *(23b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Prashant Veer c & b Praful 11 *(9b, 2x4)*, Akeal Hosein (not out) 3 *(1b)*; Extras (nb-1, w-8): 9; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 180.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-31 (Samson, 2.3 overs), 2-48 (Urvil, 4.3), 3-90 (Kartik, 9.4), 4-100 (Ruturaj, 11.3), 5-159 (Brevis, 17.5), 6-164 (Dube, 18.3), 7-180 (Prashant, 19.6).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Nitish Kumar 2-0-35-0, Praful 3-0-37-1, Cummins 4-0-28-3, Malinga 4-0-26-1, Sakib 4-0-34-2, Shivang 3-0-20-0.

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Abhishek Sharma c Johnson b Akeal 26 *(21b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Travis Head **(Impact Player for Sakib)** c & b Mukesh 6 *(6b, 1x4)*, Ishan Kishan c Urvil b Kamboj 70 *(47b, 7x4, 3x6)*, Heinrich Klaasen st. Samson b Noor 47 *(26b, 6x4, 2x6)*, Nitish Kumar c Urvil b Mukesh 11 *(7b, 1x4)*, Salil Arora (not out) 10 *(5b, 1x6)*, R. Smaran (not out) 5 *(2b, 1x4)*; Extras (w-6): 6; Total (for five wkts. in 19 overs): 181.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-18 (Head, 2.3), 2-56 (Abhishek, 7.4), 3-131 (Klaasen, 14.3), 4-153 (Nitish, 17.1), 5-175 (Kishan, 18.3).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Mukesh **(Impact Player for Kartik)** 4-0-36-2, Johnson 3-0-26-0, Kamboj 4-0-46-1, Noor 4-0-40-1, Akeal 3-0-21-1, Dube 1-0-12-0.

Toss: CSK; **PoM:** Kishan.
SRH won by five wickets with six balls to spare.

Next assignment

CSK: May 21 vs. GT Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

SRH: May 22 vs. RCB Hyderabad, 7.30 p.m.

Costly drop

Having been dropped on 18 by Spencer Johnson off Noor Ahmad, the South African piled on the agony, immediately smashing the Afghan spinner for a six and four; he also hit two more boundaries off Shivam Dube.

Klaasen's knock allowed Kishan to grow in confidence at the other end. The left-hander took on Anshul Kamboj in a 16-run 13th over. Once Klaasen departed, Kishan took charge and steered his side to within striking distance before being dismissed.

Earlier, cameos from Dewald Brevis (44, 27b, 2x4, 4x6) and Kartik Sharma (32, 19b, 3x4, 2x6) helped Super Kings reach 180 for seven.

Sunrisers' pacers, led by skipper Pat Cummins, were on the money in taking pace off their deliveries and bowling into the surface which was on the slower side. The Australian was at his metronomic best, returning figures of 4-0-28-3.

He was well supported by Sakib Hussain (two for 34) and Eshan Malinga (one for 26).

From 100 for four, Brevis helped the hosts finish with a respectable total.

However, it wasn't enough once a determined Kishan and Klaasen took strike as Ruturaj Gaikwad's men ended their final home game of the season on a sour note.

In focus: Archer needs to strike early. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

RR desperate for a victory over LSG

P.K. Ajith Kumar
JAIPUR

IPL is a beast. Ask Rajasthan Royals.

The Royals had begun their campaign with four wins in a row. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, the boy in just his second season, was treating men like Jasprit Bumrah and Josh Hazlewood, who between them have 1020 international wickets, with little respect. Jofra Archer and Nandre Burger were breathing fire with the new ball.

The Men in Pink were looking to settle the issue in the PowerPlay, with bat and ball, just about every time. Things were indeed looking rosy, and their fans must have been already looking forward to the playoffs. Some five weeks later, those hopes are still there, but enough concerns as well, with just two games remaining. After losing their last three matches, Riyan Parag's men are in a desperate situation. First, they have to win against Lucknow Super Giants on Tuesday.

To win a match at their home ground, the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, is something they haven't done this season, having lost all the three previous ones – in sharp contrast to their record at their home away from home, Guwahati's Barsapara Cricket Stadium, where they won all the three.

And Royals have to recover quickly from their disappointing five-wicket loss to Delhi Capitals at New Delhi on Sunday, where they slid from 161 for two to 191 for eight. They cannot afford one more collapse like that.

Another breathless start from Sooryavanshi would be great, but Parag and Dhruv Jurel, who both scored fifties against Capitals, need to bat deeper. Archer has to produce another spell of quality.

LSG may be out of the race for a place in the top four, but they should be in a confident frame of mind after the recent wins against table-topper Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Chennai Super Kings.

Today's match

RAJASTHAN ROYALS vs LSG

Jaipur, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 7
RR 5 | LSG 2

PREVIOUS MEETING
RR won by 40 runs, 2026

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Starc is one of the best role models: Badani

Anirudh Velamuri
NEW DELHI

For a long period on Sunday, Rajasthan Royals seemed destined to bury Delhi Capitals under a massive first-innings score. But veteran left-arm pacer Mitchell Starc flipped the script.

The visitor was cruising at 161 for two before Starc produced a devastating burst in the death overs – scalping four wickets – and derailed the innings. The spell ultimately proved decisive in Capitals' five-wicket win. His performance earned glowing praise from DC head coach Hemang Badani, who termed the 36-year-old "one of the best role models in the sport."

"His work ethic, preparation with his own plans and training are above par. I don't even see that with a lot of the younger boys. That's the reason he has sustained for so long. He's always talking to the younger lads and trying to pass on the knowledge. There is immense conversation that Starc brings to the table," Badani said.

Starc... impact player. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Badani also lamented Starc's absence for a significant portion of the season while expressing hope that a long-term solution could eventually be worked out between franchises and National boards.

Win toss and field first — the dominant trend

Natalia Hannah Rice

Flip the coin, call it right, point to the field. It has become as predictable as batting fireworks in a Power-Play. Season after season, captains have surrendered to the same instinct, and IPL 2026 has offered no deviation from that well-worn path.

In the 63 matches this season (till the Chennai Super Kings-Sunrisers Hyderabad clash on Monday), toss winners have elected to field in 52.

The logic is old: dew in evening games makes it difficult to grip the ball, blunts spin, and tilts the contest decisively in favour of the side batting second. It is a formula that has been applied across editions, and in 2026, nobody has seen fit to discard it.

Teams that chose to field went on to win thirty two of those 52. In the first 48 matches, sides chasing 200 or more held a 12-11 win-loss record, against 4-13 at the same stage last year. IPL 2026 has already produced 38 successful chases in 58 games.

Ruturaj and Cummins at the toss. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Batting first, meanwhile, has been a lonely road. Only 11 toss winners have gone against the grain and chosen to take first strike, and just one of them has emerged triumphant – Rajasthan Royals against Gujarat Titans on April 4. The other 10 went on to lose, a grim ledger that has kept captains firmly wedded to the field-first faith.

Some big moments of the season have only deepened that conviction. Mumbai Indians, sent in to experience the pitch first at Wankhede, made 243 for five – its highest-ever first-innings IPL total – only for Sunrisers Hyderabad to swallow it with eight balls to spare.

Punjab Kings hunted down 265 against Delhi Capitals, the highest successful chase in T20 history. K.L. Rahul's unbeaten 152 off just 67 balls, the highest IPL score by an Indian, was still not enough. His side had batted first.

Decision-making after the toss has become less a gamble and more a script.

'Rare talent Mayank has to be taken care of'

P.K. Ajith Kumar
JAIPUR

Mayank Yadav is that rare Indian talent. The genuine fast bowler. He had made a dream debut in the IPL two years ago, when he took three for 27 for Lucknow Super Giants against Punjab Kings and clocked 155.8 kmph - the fastest ball yet of the season. He went on to bowl even quicker.

But life has not been kind to Mayank after that brilliant start to his career. He got injured and the comeback hasn't been easy.

His bowling coach at LSG, Bharat Arun, however, has still plenty of faith in him. "Mayank is such a rare talent for us, but unfortunately, he has been out due to injuries for the last two years and has been inconsistent while playing. He is now fit and raring to go and bowling with good pace. He is somebody we have to take care of".

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Royal Challengers (Q)	13	9	4	0	18	1.065
Gujarat Titans (Q)	13	8	5	0	16	0.400
Sunrisers Hyderabad (Q)	13	8	5	0	16	0.350
Punjab Kings	13	6	6	1	13	0.227
Rajasthan Royals	12	6	6	0	12	0.027
Chennai Super Kings	13	6	7	0	12	-0.016
Delhi Capitals	13	6	7	0	12	-0.871
Kolkata Knight Riders	12	5	6	1	11	-0.038
Mumbai Indians (E)	12	4	8	0	8	-0.504
Lucknow Super Giants (E)	12	4	8	0	8	-0.701

Q: Qualified | **E:** Eliminated

Modric picked in Croatia's WC squad

Associated Press
ZAGREB

Luka Modric was on Monday included in Croatia's squad as the 40-year-old midfielder is set to play in his fifth World Cup.

Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic named a 26-man roster also featuring Ivan Perisic, who scored in the past three tournaments. Modric broke his cheekbone last month but the Croatia captain is expected to be fit when Croatia kicks off its World Cup campaign against England on June 17.

The squad: Goalkeepers: Dominik Livakovic, Dominik Kotarski, Ivor Pandur; **Defenders:** Josko Gvardiol, Duje Caleta-Car, Josip Sutalo, Josip Stanisic, Marin Pongracic, Martin Erlic, Luka Vuskovic; **Midfielders:** Luka Modric, Mateo Kovacic, Mario Pasalic, Nikola Vlasic, Luka Sucic, Martin Baturina, Kristijan Jakic, Petar Sucic, Nikola Moro, Toni Fruk; **Forwards:** Ivan Perisic, Andrej Kramaric, Ante Budimir, Marco Pasalic, Petar Musa, Igor Matanovic.

INBRIEF

Olympian Jennifer, Paes' mother, passes away

Former India basketball captain and Olympian Jennifer Paes, mother of tennis player Leander Paes, passed away on Sunday after a prolonged battle with cancer. She was 72. She represented India in basketball at the 1972 Munich Olympics and later captained the National team.

Mushfiqur's hundred puts Bangladesh in driver's seat

Mushfiqur Rahim hit 137 (233b, 12x4, 1x6) as Bangladesh set Pakistan a 437-run target in the second Test in Sylhet on Monday.

The scores: Bangladesh 278 & 390 in 102.2 overs (Joy 52, Mushfiqur 137, Litton 69, Khurram Shahzad 4/86) vs Pakistan 232 & 0/0 in two overs.

Former England Test captain MJK Smith passes away at 92

Former England Test captain Mike Smith passed away at the age of 92. The bespectacled batter, known by his initials MJK, played 50 Tests for England, captaining on 25 occasions, and was also a rugby union international, earning one cap against Wales in 1956. He made his Test debut against New Zealand in 1958 and played his final Test against Australia in 1972.

Emotional affair: Barcelona players celebrate with Lewandowski after his final home game. REUTERS

Lewandowski bids heartfelt goodbye to Camp Nou

Barcelona finishes LaLiga season with a perfect record at home; Atletico's Griezmann plays his final home match in win over Girona

EURO LEAGUES

Associated Press
MADRID

LaLiga champion Barcelona capped a perfect season at home – 19 wins in 19 LaLiga matches – with a 3-1 victory over Real Betis on Sunday as Robert Lewandowski bid an emotional farewell to Camp Nou.

Barcelona announced on Saturday that the 37-year-old Lewandowski was leaving after four seasons. Antoine Griezmann said goodbye to Atletico Madrid's fans at the Metropolitano stadium before his move to the United States to play in Major League Soccer. Griezmann was involved in Atletico's 1-0 victory over Girona.

In Barcelona, a brace by Raphinha and a goal by Joao Cancelo kept the Catalan club's perfect record at home intact in the Spanish league. Barcelona had already clinched its second straight league title two rounds ago. There is one round of matches left.

Sevilla avoided relegation despite a 0-1 loss to Real Madrid at home.

Top results: LaLiga: Atletico Madrid 1 (Lookman 21) bt Girona 0; Elche 1 (Chust 19) bt Getafe 0; Real Oviedo 0 lost to Alaves 1 (Martinez 17); Levante 2 (Espi 32, Arriaga 87) bt Real Mallorca 0; Osasuna 1 (Munoz 49) lost to Espanyol 2 (Romero 27, Garcia 53); Rayo Vallecano 2 (Camello 28, Alemao 47) bt Villarreal 0; Real Sociedad 3 (Munoz 3, Tarrega 60-og, Oskarsson 63) lost to Valencia 4 (Guerra 8, 90+3, Duro 22, Rodriguez 89); Athletic Bilbao 1 (Inaki Williams 52) drew with Celta Vigo 1 (Swedberg 4); Sevilla 0 lost to Real Madrid 1 (Vinicius 15); Barcelona 3 (Raphinha 28, 62, Cancelo 74) bt Real Betis 1 (Isco 69-pen).

Premier League: Newcastle 3 (Woltemade 15, Osula 19, 65) bt West Ham 1 (Castellanos 69).

Serie A: Inter Milan 1 (Bonny 47) drew with Verona 1 (Bowie 90+1); Atalanta 0 lost to Bologna 1 (Orsolini 78); Cagliari 2 (Esposito 39, Mina 45+2) bt Torino 1 (Obrador 38); Sassuolo 2 (Lauriente 20, Pinamonti 82) lost to Lecce 3 (Cheddira 14, 25, Stulic 90+6); Udinese 0 lost to Cremonese 1 (Vardy 9).

Rain mars opening day's action

TENNIS

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Persistent rain played spoilsport on the opening day of the main draw of the S.M. Krishna Memorial Open ATP Challenger, forcing all five singles and one doubles match to be suspended at the S.M. Krishna Tennis Stadium here on Monday.

Seventh seed Karan Singh was locked 5-5 (30-0) against Malaysia's Mitsuki Wei Kang Leong when showers interrupted the proceedings.

Aradhya Kshitij, 17, entered the main draw with a 7-6(2), 6-4 win over Nitin Kumar Sinha in the final qualifying round.

Fond remembrance: Dignitaries pay tribute to S.M. Krishna.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Earlier, the inaugural ceremony of the tournament paid tribute to the late S.M. Krishna, former Chief Minister of Karnataka and ex-KSLTA president.

MLC K. Govindaraj, Karnataka Olympic Association president and FIBA (Asia) president, members of Krishna's family – daughters Malavika Hegde, Shambhavi Umesh, and grandson Ishaan Hegde – and AITA honorary joint secretary Sunil Yajaman were some of the dignitaries present on the occasion.

Indian squads for Asian Games named

ARCHERY

Sports Bureau

India's recurve and compound archery squads for the 2026 Asian Games, across both men's and women's categories, have been finalised following the selection at Sonipat.

In the men's compound event, Sahil Rajesh Jadhav topped the standings, with Kushal Dalal and Ganesh Thiru Muru securing the remaining spots. The top three in each category qualified for the quadrennial event.

Rishabh Yadav, Ojas Pravin Deotale and Abhishek Verma are among the prominent names who failed to make the cut.

While the men's compound squad features significant changes, the women's category continues to be led by V. Jyothi Surekha. She once again topped the qualification standings and will be joined by Taniparthi Chikitha and Prithika Pradeep.

In recurve, B. Dhiraj and Kirti Sharma emerged as the standout performers in the men's and women's categories, respectively. Deepika Kumari and Atanu Das narrowly missed out after finishing just outside the top three.

The squads: Compound Men: Sahil Rajesh Jadhav, Kushal Dalal, Ganesh Thiru Muru; **Women:** Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Taniparthi Chikitha, Prithika Pradeep.

Recurve: Men: Bommadevara Dhiraj, Neeraj Chauhan,Yashdeep Bhoge; **Women:** Kirti Sharma, Kumkum Anil Mohod, Ankita Bhakat.

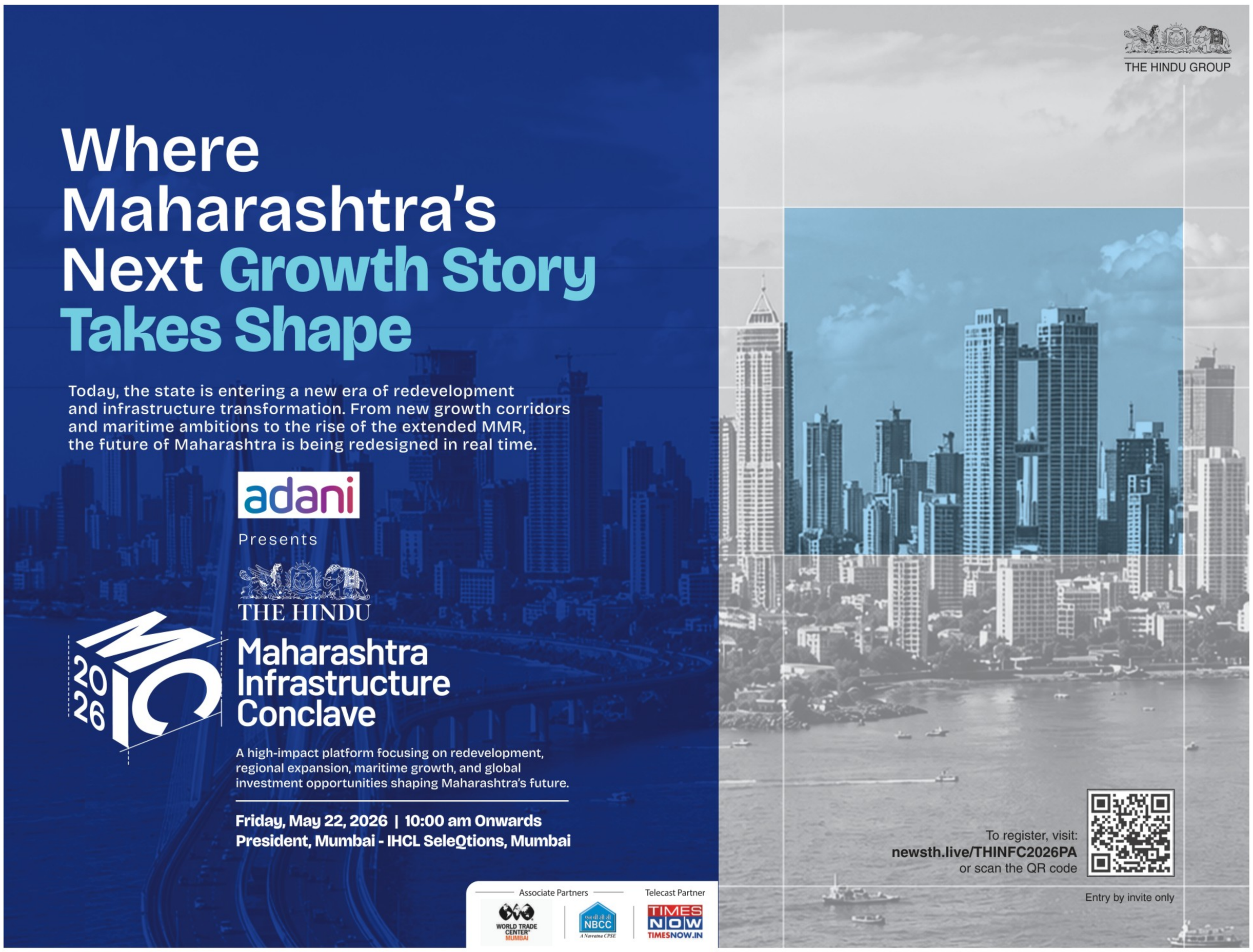
Blasters end season with a win

Sports Bureau
KOCHI

Kerala Blasters posted a 2-1 win over FC Goa on Monday to end its tough ISL season on a positive note.

Blasters completed a dramatic turnaround under Ashley Westwood. The team finished eighth with 17 points while Goa finished a rung higher with 20 points.

The result: Kerala Blasters 2 (Yoke 48, Ndiaye 81) bt FC Goa (Nemil 62).

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs Pakistan: 2nd Test, Day 4, FanCode, 9.30 a.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.